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ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



NEWS

AMAA



EMPOWERING AMAA'S GLOBAL MISSION

LVI 2
April-May-June
2022

Armenian Missionary Association of Canada
Armenian Missionary Association of Australia



AMAA

ARMENIAN MISSIONARY
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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The Global AMAA Mission

*Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.
Offer hospitality to each other without grumbling. 1 Peter 4:8-9*

By Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO

The successive industrial revolutions of the past few centuries have affected life on this planet in ways incomparable to time immortal since life was introduced on earth. This amazing transformation in the way we live, behave, relate and work was once again revolutionized with the tech revolution, or the fourth industrial revolution of the last few decades. So much so that it is hard to imagine what the not-so-distant future will bring.

Apart from what ordinary citizens see and experience, there is a lot that goes on beyond our knowledge and imagination. Some of it is good, which for a hefty price, will one day be offered on silver plates to the consumer public. What is frightening is the rest of the tech revolution that is weaponized by nations under the misuse of the magic word - 'defense.' Even outer space is being weaponized to dominate this God given beautiful miracle planet. You see, 'defense' is attractive, but each 'defense' is someone else's conceived 'offense,' which makes all of it offensive. All that while poverty and hunger decease and injustices rule the world.

The whirlwind of the above thoughts is the natural consequence of the state of affairs on the planet as we are living today. From Ukraine and Russia, Europe and the US, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Artsakh. And, when has the Near East ever been off the crisis radar?

Where do we stand in this maze of universal anguish?

The incredible support and wave of prayers that I recently received after my surgery was overwhelming. The echo was global coming from every corner of the world. I am truly humbled with all the love and well wishes expressed but most of all by the prayers that were raised to the ultimate healer.

I reckon that none of that belongs to me but reverts to the good name and reputation of the AMAA as it continues to expand its services in the countries it serves and beyond. The latest addition to the list of countries is Ukraine and its Armenian community who have taken refuge in East Europe or returned to Armenia.

This issue of the AMAA News is dedicated to our mission partners, the Armenian Missionary Association of Canada and the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia. As AMAA's global services expand and increase, the stories covered here beautifully narrate the role of these two AMAA partners who have long borne the crown of unabashed and unwavering support of the mission.

While giants are busy building 'defenses,' weaponizing space and plotting in the dark, the AMAA builds, educates, shelters, feeds and quenches globally. From Beirut to Brussels, Aleppo to Askeran, Stepanakert to Sofia, hand in hand with Sydney, Montreal and Toronto.

Love is at the core of the mission, the Global AMAA mission.

Thank you for your support.



May 15, 2022

Glendale, California

Message From Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO

Dear Ministry Partners,
Dear Friends,

It is with a grateful heart that I want to update you on my recovery. It has been a month since I underwent open-heart surgery and I am beyond thankful for the prayers and support of an incredible community, worldwide circle of friends and acquaintances and an amazing support of family. I am thankful for the medical intervention and the wisdom of my Doctors. I am also thankful for the opportunity God has granted me to continue working with you and this amazing mission.

I declare that the Lord is my healer and your prayers certainly have been heard. I have slowly been keeping up with some of the day-to-day duties and look forward to my full recovery and returning to my mission purpose.

With a humbling heart,
Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO

Սիրելի Գործակիցներ,
Սիրելի Բարեկամներ,

Երախտապարտ սրտով կ'ուզեմ տեղեկացնել ապաքինման մասին: Արդեն ամիս մը անցած է այն օրեն, երբ սրտի վիրահասուլթեան ենթարկուեցայ: Չափազանց շնորհակալ եմ անզուգական համայնքի մը, ինչպէս նաև աշխարհացրի սիրելի բարեկամներու, ծանօթներու եւ անմիջական ընտանիքին՝ իրենց աղօթքներուն եւ զօրակցութեան համար: Շնորհակալ եմ բժիշկներու միջամտութեան եւ մասնագիտութեան համար: Շնորհակալ եւնաել այն հևարարութեան, որ Աստուած ընձեռնած է ինձի շարունակելու իմ աշխատանքը ձեր եւ այս եզակի առաքելութեան հետ:

Գիտակից եմ, որ Տէրն է իմ բուժիչը, եւ ձեր աղօթքները վստահաբար լսուած են: Արդեն մասամբ կը հետեւիմ իմ առօրեայ պարտականութիւններու կատարման, եւ անհամբեր կը սպասեմ իմ ամբողջական ապաքինման եւ իմ առաքելութեան նպատակին վերադարձի:

Խոնարի սրտով,
Զաւեն Խանճյան, Աւետարանչականի Գործադիր Տնօրին

SAVE THE DATE

**10/22/2022
PARAMUS, NJ**



AMAA 103RD ANNUAL MEETING



Founding members of AMAC. First Row L to R: Antibas Loussarian, Sonia Matossian, Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian, Dr. George Ajernian, Dr. George Bezirganian (representing AMAA), Rev. Ardashes Kerbabian and Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian (representing AMAA). Second Row L to R: Papken Tountaian, Anton Torunian, Alice Marandjian, Rev. Abraham Jizmejian, Rev. Hovhannes Agnerian, Karekin Sagherian and Hagop Basmadjian. Third Row L to R: Mihran Jizmejian, Puzant Danaian, Rev. Jirair Bezdigian, Solicitor Robert Adourian, and Bedros Kakoussian.

The Armenian Missionary Association of Canada

A Brief History

By Raffi Shnorhokian*

During the 1915 Armenian Genocide, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred.

In addition to the loss of innocent human lives, organized Armenian communities and institutions were wiped out, not least of which was the Armenian Evangelical Church, which had been established on July 1, 1846, in Istanbul, Turkey.

Before the high-level orchestrated efforts of ethnic cleansing, there were 137

Armenian Evangelical Churches in Turkey, of which only 31 were left. Out of 175 ordained ministers, only 43 survived. Out of 270 church schools, only 32 remained. Out of 369 elementary schools, 31 survived; of the 46 secondary schools, none remained; and out of the eight colleges, only four were spared. The aftermath of the great atrocities was that the survivors of the Genocide were dispersed throughout the world.

In the wake of this international tragedy, through the vision and wisdom of a group

of Armenian Evangelical Church Ministers and Lay Leaders, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was founded in Worcester, MA on June 7, 1918, with the purpose "***To strengthen the spiritual life of our Churches and to rebuild the ruined churches of the fatherland.***"

Following AMAA's example, representatives of the four Armenian Evangelical Churches in Canada—Toronto, Cambridge and both churches of Montreal—met in the presence of AMAA's Executive Director



AMAC Inaugural meeting held on May 29, 1982 in Toronto Church's old building on Glenforest Road in the presence of AMAA Executive Director Rev. Dr. Giragos Chopourian (sitting on the far right side).

Rev. Dr. Giragos Chopourian and the Field Director Rev. Dr. Movses B. Janbazian on May 29, 1982, in Toronto, to establish a similar organization in Canada. During this first meeting, Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian served as Chair and Mr. Mihran Jizmejian as the Secretary. It was unanimously decided to apply to the federal government for charitable status for the Association. The Armenian Missionary Association of Canada (AMAC) was established on March 17, 1984. The Canadian federal government issued the Charitable Association Status # **89062 4190 RC0001** on September 7, 1984.

The following were the founding members of the AMAC: Reverends Abraham Jizmejian, Ardashes Kerbabian, Hovhannes Agnerian, Yessayi Sarmazian, Jerair Bzdikian, Ms. Alice Marandjian, Ms. Sonia Matossian, Dr. George Ajemian, Messrs. Anton Torunian, Karekin Sagherian, Papken Tountaian, Hagop Basmadjian, Souren Hadjian, Sarkis Hanenian, Mihran Jizmejian, Antibus Loussarian, Puzant Danaian and Hagop Kaakahjian.

Dr. George Ajemian served as the first President of the Association from 1984-1991. The second President, Mr. Mihran Jizmejian, relocated AMAC's headquarters from Montreal to Toronto in 1992. The Toronto church graciously allowed a room in the basement of the 28 Glenforest Road building to be used as an office until 1998, when the Church moved to its new building complex in the city of Markham, Ontario. During these six years, the office had a part-time secretary.

In the last 38 years, the following individuals have served as Presidents: Mr.

Hagop Basmadjian, Rev. Mher Khatchigian, Mr. David Torunian, Mr. Ghevont Nalbandian, Mr. Mihran Jizmejian and Mr. Raffi Shnorhokian.

Mr. Antibus Loussarian, Ms. Sona Matossian, Mr. Nubar Doramadjian, Mr. Hagop Basmadjian, Mr. Jack Kafesdjian and Mr. Sarkis Marandjian have served as Treasurers.

We praise God and thank all the Board members who have faithfully served the Association since 1984. The current Board members are the following: Mr. Raffi Shnorhokian (President), Mr. Mihran Jizmejian (Chairman), Mrs. Ruth Demirdjian Duench (Vice Chair), Ms. Seta Zorayan (Secretary), Mr. Jack Kafesdjian and Mr. Sarkis Marandjian (Treasurers), Rev. Georges Dabbo, Pastor Mardiros Eglençeyan, Mrs. Alice Hadjian, Mr. Edward Arabian, Mr. Harout Nercessian, Mr. Aris Kalemkerian, Mr. Sevag Melkonian and Mr. David Torunian.

For more than 100 years in the United States and 35 years in Canada, the two Armenian Missionary Associations have continued to serve the physical and spiritual needs of our people. To fulfill this worldwide mission, AMAA and AMAC maintain a wide range of educational, relief, social service, evangelistic, church and childcare ministries in 24 countries around the world.

The following are some of the ongoing projects of the Armenian Missionary Association of Canada.

Child Sponsorship

AMAC members and friends sponsor 165 children in Armenia, Artsakh and Lebanon. The annual sponsorship fee of

\$300 covers all the basic needs of the child. Social workers visit the child and their families regularly throughout the year and provide them financial support, relief supplies, counseling and other services as needed. The children also benefit from free sports, arts and crafts classes, as well as Christmas and Easter gifts.

Lebanon Relief Fund and Armenian Evangelical School in Anjar

Lebanon is experiencing a severe and prolonged economic depression. Prices are skyrocketing, while the Lebanese currency keeps losing value. Poverty has risen sharply, and a very high percentage of the population are not able to provide the basic necessities to their families. The AMAC sent US\$25,000 in 2021 to support the Armenian Evangelical School of Anjar, which is the only school in the Near East Diaspora that provides both residential care and education. In addition to this, US\$15,000 was sent to support the needy families in the Armenian Evangelical community of Lebanon.

Backpacks for Children in Artsakh

The backpack project started with an idea, turned into a mission and ended up being a very successful project, thanks to the Armenian community of Montreal. Hundreds of families brought toys, school supplies and warm clothing to fill 1,100 backpacks. Dozens of volunteers worked around the clock to sort the gifts, put them in backpacks, package them in cartons and fill up the container which was parked at the First Armenian Evangelical Church parking lot. Some people who were not able to buy gifts provided monetary donations, which allowed the organizing committee to make the purchases on their behalf.

The backpacks arrived in Armenia and were distributed to the children and families of remote villages of Armenia and Artsakh including Kornidzor, Tegh, Karashen, Vorotan, Shurnukh and Bardzravan, putting much-needed smiles on their faces.

In addition to the backpack project, the AMAC also sent two full containers of warm



clothing and medical supplies from Toronto to Armenia and Arstakh following the war.

Minibuses for Armenia

Two Mercedes Sprinter minibuses were shipped from Toronto to Armenia in 2021, thanks to the generosity of Honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia in Toronto, Armenian Canadian philanthropist, Mr.

Varoujan Lapoyan, and Mr. Raffi Tokmakjian, President of Tok Group.

One of the minibuses was allocated to Avedisian School in Yerevan and is already in use. The second one is being used by the AMAA social workers for transportation between Yerevan and other cities in Armenia and Artsakh.



Askeran Kindergarten

The kindergarten in Askeran was renamed the Mr. & Mrs. Yeprem and Zabel Basmadjian Kindergarten in loving memory of the parents of one of AMAC's founding members and long-term serving Board member Hagop Basmadjian. The AMAC continues to finance the annual operating costs of this kindergarten.

Shogh Center

The AMAA Vanadzor Shogh Center was named as the Sarkis and Haygouhie Marandjian Shogh Center. AMAA Armenia held a ceremony to unveil a plaque as an expression of profound gratitude to the benefactors, Sarkis and Haygouhie Marandjian of Toronto, members and benefactors of the Armenian Missionary Association of Canada (AMAC). Sarkis Marandjian is also a Board member of the AMAC.



Seminars in Montreal

The Montreal chapter of the AMAC organized two fundraising seminars, with four sessions each. The first seminar was a parenting seminar, aimed at helping parents discover and understand the character of their children and learning the effective ways to help them succeed in life. The second seminar was to teach basic life skills to children ages 9-12. Both seminars were very successful, thanks to the great work of the program director, Salpi Nercessian.

The above are only some of the programs that the AMAC has supported over the last few years. There are a lot more which you can read about at the www.amacnews.org website.

Armenian Evangelical Day Celebrations

It has been customary to celebrate the Armenian Evangelical Day, usually in July every year in and around Kingston Ontario, to facilitate the membership of our four founding member Churches in Canada, which are located in Montreal, Toronto and Cambridge to come together, for a one-day retreat of fun, fellowship and worship.

The program of the day includes a regular worship service at 11 a.m., followed by lunch and AMAC's Annual Meeting in the afternoon, where reports are read by the

president and the financial report presented by the treasurer of the Association.

A question-and-answer period follows the reports and the newly elected Board members are announced to all present. The Armenian Evangelical Day Celebration ends with a Communion Service officiated by the clergy present.

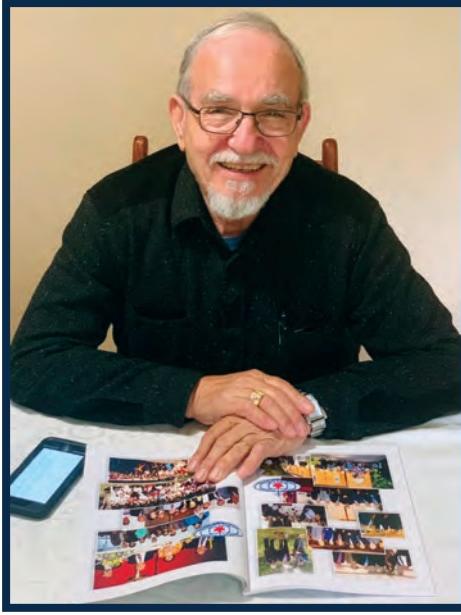
Unfortunately, due to the pandemic we have been unable to organize the one-day retreats in 2019, 2020 and 2021. God willing, on July 16, 2022 we will have the Armenian Evangelical one-day retreat at Grace United Church in Gananoque, Ontario with joyful hearts praising God and celebrating 175 years of the Armenian Evangelical Movement and Church.

Mihran Jizmejian A Pillar of the AMAC

The AMAC would like to extend its appreciation to all its members and supporters, including the four Armenian Evangelical Churches of Canada and their congregations. Our mission cannot be carried forward without the faithfulness and dedication of the Canadians who stand behind the organization.

We would like to highlight the contribution of one of the pillars of this organization, Mihran Jizmejian. Mr. Jizmejian has been a founding member of AMAC





Mihran Jizmejian.

since its inception in 1984. During the last 38 years, Mr. Jizmejian has been an inspirational leader of the AMAC who has devoted his time, energy, effort and finances to further the noble mission of the organization and ensure all programs are well-funded and supported. At present, he is only one of two founding members who has been actively involved in the Association in various roles: Chairman, President, Executive Director. Mr. Jizmejian is a very effective fundraiser who, beyond any doubt, has attracted more funds to AMAC than any other individual.

Besides fundraising, Mr. Jizmejian has personally championed a number of important initiatives including:

- "Manga Messia" children's Bible in the style of Japanese Anime that readily appeals to all ages. Over three thousand copies of these Armenian-language Bibles were printed and distributed throughout Canada, the United States and abroad.

- The "Heifer Project," which, in collaboration with the "Heifer International" organization, donated one cow each to thirteen families in the Kishan village of Artsakh. The families can sell products made from the milk produced from the cows to support themselves.

- The **kindergarten in Askeran**, Artsakh, needed repairs to its building and grounds. Through funds raised by the efforts of Mr. Jizmejian, AMAC supported the asphalting of the school yard as well as fencing of the yard. AMAC continues to support the KG since that time.

- Undoubtedly, Mr. Jizmejian's legacy to the Armenian Evangelical community



AMAC Inaugural Banquet held in Montreal in September of 1984. L to R: Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian, Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian, Rev. Jerair Bizdikian, Mihran Jizmejian, Dr. George Ajemian, Dr. George Bezirgianian and Sonia Matossian.



Cutting AMAC's 35th Anniversary cake in Toronto. L to R: Pastor Ara Balekjian, Rev. Krikor Garabedian, Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian, Mihran Jizmejian, Ontario Member of Parliament Aris Babikian, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia Van Lapoyan, Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, Solicitor Robert Adourian and Armen Buchakjian.



Cutting AMAC's 35th Anniversary cake in Montreal. L to R: Pastor Mardiros Eglençyan, Adom Boudjikian, Rev. Hovhannes Svadjian, Dr. Nazareth Darakjian and Rev. Georges Dabbo.

in Canada is the "**Evangelical Day Celebrations**," which brings together the four churches in Canada for a one-day retreat during the summer.

While Mr. Jizmejian contemplates a well-deserved retirement, we are certain that he will continue to use his power of vision, fundraising talents, and connections for the glory of God and the benefit of AMAC. Thank you, Mr. Jizmejian, for who you are and what you have done in

the birth and life of the AMAC. You have been, and continue to be, a faithful servant of the Lord. ☺



***Raffi Shnorhokian** is the President of AMAC.



Former AMAA Executive Director Andy Torigian officially launches the formation of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia on Sunday, March 11, 2001. Pictured L to R: Andy Torigian with several of the initial AMA-Australia Board members Lucy Aroyan, Lena Bomoushakian, Barkev Ishkhanian and Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian.

The Armenian Missionary Association of Australia

A Brief History

By Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian*

The Armenian Missionary Association of Australia was created through God's providence and the vision of the Armenian Missionary Association of America's long-time Executive Director, the late Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian. During his visit in August 1999 to Australia, Rev. Janbazian suggested and encouraged us to establish a District Committee of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia. The plan was to do preliminary work in 2000 and as a first step, to approach some members of the Armenian

Evangelical Church of Sydney as potential candidates and appoint them as members of the first Board.

As the preliminary deliberations were going on with the potential candidates and the registration of the Association as an Incorporation and Charity organization to operate in Australia, the unforeseen happened – the unexpected death of Rev. Janbazian in September 2000. But to realize his insight and vision, in March 2001, the AMAA's Executive Director Mr. Andy Torigian was invited to Sydney to induct the following as

members of the first Board: Mr. Hovhannes Soghomonian, Mr. Barkev Ishkhanian, Mr. Sevag Chelebian, Mrs. Lucy Aroyan, Mrs. Lena Bomoushakian, Miss Arpi Giragosian and Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian as President/CEO.

Hence, the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia's first seven Board members and subsequently elected members, provided their participation and service and broadened the Association's work, adopting projects and raising the needed funds to implement them.

From 2001-2021, the following people have served as Board members with various tenures:

Mrs. Maggie Ishkhanian, Miss Asdghig Natarian, Mrs. Araxie Soghomonian, Mrs. Asdghig Manougian, Mrs. Sosi Paproumian, Mr. Yerachan Giragossian, Mr. Nero Aroyan, Mr. Vahe Tomassian, Mr. Apraham Ishkhanian, Mr. Thomas Tomassian, Dr. Mark Cholakyan and Mr. Vicken Keledjian.

Current members are: Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian - President/CEO; Mr. Avo Soghomonian - Chairman (third term); Mr. Varant Bomoushakian - Secretary; Dr. Elias Kehdi - Treasurer; Mrs. Marie Soghomonian (second term) and Mr. Movses Injejkian (second term).



AMA Australia Board members. L to R: Varant Bomoushakian, Vicken Soghomonian, Avo Soghomonian, Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian, Dr. Elias Kehdi and Movses Injejkian.

Both the previous and current Board members provided their humble service to the far-reaching mission work of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, adding to a legacy of 82 years of missionary service which has since been extended

from the Middle East to include Armenia, Artsakh, Eastern Europe, as well as Eurasia and even reaching our shores in Australia.

The budget of AMA Australia for the first year (2001) was only \$12,360. In 2020 our budget reached \$191,600 and in 2018, the year when we celebrated the Centenary of the AMAA, our budget reached \$300,825.

Our service had humble beginnings, yet today with God's blessing, it has reached a new milestone.

By God's grace and with the continuous support of all those who extend a helping hand, be it members of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sydney or members of the Armenian community and dear friends, we are glad to announce

that as of June 2022 the total funds raised has surpassed \$2,500,000 and continues to grow. This amount could seem to be small compared to funds that the Armenian Missionary Association of America has raised in the past 100 years to support its mission. But it is still a substantial sum, considering that all the work is done by volunteers, with no paid staff, no office and physical address. Hence the only expense being mailing

expenses for the distribution of literature, which includes the AMAA NEWS and Our Daily Bread. The office of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia is just a laptop computer. The current one being only the second laptop we ever had, which



was purchased with a government grant we received in 2021.

Our ongoing support goes to the AMAA's Sponsorship Program for the children of Armenia and Artsakh and students in Lebanon. This year the number of sponsored children and students AMA Australia supports is 81.

For our annual event, which is usually planned and realized each March, the Association adopts a goal, and all the proceeds of that year are given to that purpose. For example, our beneficiaries have included: Emergency Support to Syria, Lebanon, Armenia and Artsakh, Shogh Centers in Armenia and Artsakh, children and youth summer camps, supporting poor and needy families, renovation of church and school properties, medical support, Syrian Armenian refugees



The first group of students from Central High School of Ashrafiyah (2016) receiving the Anthony Rozanski Scholarships with Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian on the left and Principal Maral Deyirmenjian on the right.

Sending a truck full of emergency supplies to Armenia soon after the 1988 devastating earthquake.

travel assistance, full tuition for those students who have been the first in their class at Central High School in Beirut from the proceeds of the Rozanski Fund, spiritual literature, natural disasters in Australia and elsewhere, local charity organizations, and scholarships for Armenian university students studying in Australia, and many more.

It is worth mentioning our adopted border village of Choratan where we completely renovated and decorated the school playground and improved the underground shelter in case of attacks from our neighbors. The renovation of the playground was completed, and the official opening was held in 2015 with a big turnout from residents of the village and official delegates from neighboring towns.

After the 44-day war in Artsakh in 2020, responding to the call from the Armenian Missionary Association of America to Empower Artsakh Family program, we have secured annual sponsorships for four families. One family is sponsored by St. Andrew's Uniting Church, another one by a family from the Armenian community and another two families were sponsored by the Australians who visited Armenia and Artsakh in 2019 through the trip organized by St. Andrew's Uniting Church. This was the third trip, which included five ministers from the Uniting Church, among them the Uniting Church Australia President and the Uniting Church Australia NSW and ACT Moderator, who organized the opening of two refurbished kindergartens in Artsakh.

In 2016-2021, our annual budget was large, \$180,000, \$152,000, \$310,000, \$150,000, \$172,000 and \$194,500 respectively, enabling us to adopt substantial projects.

In 2018, almost all the \$300,000 raised was allocated to the renovation and refurbishment of kindergartens in Artsakh – the Baghdigian Kindergarten in Stepanakert and the Movses Janbazian Kindergarten in Martakert as well as hosting a record-breaking 18 guests from different parts of the world, who were invited to participate in the Centenary celebrations here in Sydney.

In 2019-2020, with the support of a few friends from the Armenian community and the AMA-Australia and AMAA, we were able to respond to the request of His Holiness Aram I Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia, to give the opportunity of higher education for the Mother Church celibate priest Father Ardag, at Charles Sturt University to study a Master in Theology in Australia. We cov-

ered all the costs, which were well over \$100,000. We are glad to report that Father Ardag completed his study at the end of 2020 receiving his Master's degree with high distinction. Currently he is serving in the Eastern Diocese of the United States.

It is impossible to present here a long list of invited guests who visited Australia and the hundreds of projects we have completed, but let's just mention a few:

AMAA Centenary Celebrations were held in Australia in March 2018 under the auspices of the then Chief Minister and currently the President of the Republic of Artsakh and our dear friend Mr. Arayik Harutyunyan. Other overseas guests were AMAA President Drs. Nazareth and Ani Darakjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO



AMAA Representatives and guests cutting the AMAA's 100th Anniversary celebratory cake: L to R: Rev. Jacques Tchoghandjian (France), Rev. Dr. René Léonian (Eurasia), Artsakh President Arayik Harutyunyan, Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian (Australia), Rev. Dr. Haroutune Selimian (Syria), Rev. Berdj Djambazian (USA), Dr. Nazareth Darakjian (AMAA President), Zaven Khanjian (AMAA Executive Director/CEO) and Rev. Gevorg Gasparian (Armenia).



Artsakh President Arayik Harutyunyan (then State Minister) guest of honor at AMAA's 100th Anniversary celebrations down under.



AMA Australia Board and AMAA's 100th Anniversary Celebrations Organizing Committee members with overseas guests.

preliminary work done before the establishment of AMA Australia. On that occasion we received a Pontifical Gontag from His Holiness Catholicos Aram I honoring Rev. Janbazian, as well as a special message from the Janbazian family in Canada.



Top row: Asdghig Natarian, Maggie and her late husband Barkev Ishkhanian.
Bottom row: Hovhannes and Azadouhie Soghomonian and Lena Bomoushakian.

In addition to the 100th Anniversary guests, during the years we have hosted other special guests including AMAA's Executive Director/CEO Mr. and Mrs. Zaven and Sona Khanjian (2016 on the occasion of our 15th Anniversary), the President of the Armenian Protestant Churches in Syria Rev. Dr. Haroutune Selimian, AMAA Representative in Armenia Mr. Harout Nercessian, Mrs. Rakel Dink, widow of Hrant Dink, to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of his death in 2017, Rev. and Mrs. Nerves and Sevan Balabanian, Rev. and Mrs. René and Sylvie Léonian, the Little Virtuosos from Armenia and Nor Yerk and many others.

As we celebrate our 20th Anniversary, we would like to express our great appreciation for the following people who served the AMAA Australia Board with great dedication and commitment:

- **Mr. and Mrs. Hovhannes and Azadouhie Soghomonian** and their family, for their continuous support over twenty years. Mr.

Soghomonian was one of the founding members, who served many years as Board member and made financial contributions during the years for all our projects. After serving two terms, Mr. Soghomonian did not put his candidacy for re-election to give the chance for his sons to serve as Board members.

- **Mrs. Maggie Ishkhanian** and her beloved late husband **Mr. Barkev Ishkhanian** and the family, for their continuous support over the years, particularly in the AMAA's Child Sponsorship and Child Education programs. Barkev tragically passed away in 2005 during his second term as Board member, leaving behind a legacy to sponsor needy children and students. The family, keeping the legacy and believing in the mission of the AMAA, established the Barkev Ishkhanian Memorial Fund to sponsor students in Lebanon from the proceeds of the Fund. Currently, the Ishkhanian family sponsors 20 out of the total 81 children sponsored by Australia.

- **Miss Asdghig Natarian**, for her many generous donations during the years, but to mention two:

- a) The refurbishment of the Central High School's Laboratory and the School Memorial Hall in Beirut.
- b) Establishing the Anthony Rozanski Fund of \$500,000. The earnings of the Fund are earmarked to provide full scholarships to seven students at Central High School, who top their class in grades 6-11. This is the seventh year that the Fund has awarded scholarships to the students.

- **Mrs. Lena Bomoushakian** and her family, not only for their continuous support and donations, but for Lena's faithful service and dedication as a long-standing Board member since the establishment of the Association in Australia 20 years ago. Lena is the only Board member who has served from 2001-2021 without a break.

To conclude this report, we express our thanks and gratitude to the members of the

Armenian Evangelical Church of Sydney for their support and for being partners in our mission.

We appreciate the dedication of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia's faithful and committed servants, encouragers, and financial supporters, most of them being from the Australian Armenian Community at large, and from non-evangelical denominations. Our supporters, seeing the good intentions of the AMAA and trusting in the good work done and service provided, gladly support our mission and programs.

Thanks to all our supporters and friends. Without their participation and financial assistance, it would have been impossible to achieve all we had achieved in the last twenty years for the glory of God.



* **Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian** is the President/CEO of AMA Australia.



ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL UNITING CHURCH Sydney

Compiled by Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian*

*"Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never
'Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail.
Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before."*



Armenian Evangelical Uniting Church of Sydney.

The year 2021 was special, in the sense that it not only marked the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia, but also marked the 55th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sydney, the 25th Anniversary of the inauguration of the new church sanctuary, the church's membership with the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of the Near East, and finally, the 175th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church.

We give thanks to God for the delivery of the God-pleasing service and programs during the past 55 years.

The story of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Sydney is one of an uphill struggle, dealt with determination and perseverance. Like it is with other denominations and religious bodies, a group of newly migrated evangelical minded believers, wished to establish our church and see it flourish in this part of the world. However, this was not something that could be achieved easily. Back in the mid-1960s, neither the number nor the means were there. With a handful of new settlers who could barely fend for themselves, it was fighting against heavy odds. One thing they were absolutely sure of, though, is that God would listen to their prayers, and that Jesus would lead the way, no matter how rocky or bumpy it could prove.

In the formation and organization of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sydney, the AMAA and the Uniting Church of



Rev. Hagop Sarkissian, Pastor of Sydney Church.

Australia had played an important role. But the spiritual service had commenced with the dedication of tireless efforts and endeavours of individuals.

This long and winding road took shape and form in 1966. Brother Khatchig Khatchigian started the first Armenian Evangelical Church on May 12, 1966, almost single-handedly, using the premises of the Congregational Church in Naremburn.

In 1973, Rev. Bernard Geukgeuzian, representing the Armenian Missionary Association of America, flew to Sydney on a fact-finding mission. He did not take long to conclude, as proposed by certain members of the congregation, that it was in the church's interest and longevity to become a member of the Congregational Union and later to the Uniting Church in Australia in 1977. Hence, on October 24,

1973, during the annual meeting of the Congregational Churches, the Armenian Evangelical fellowship received recognition as the Armenian Evangelical First Church and the above-mentioned church building in the suburb of Naremburn was given free of charge to be used for the sole purpose of the church services. The only condition was to be a member of the Congregational Union.

In 1974, Brother Khatchig resigned and brothers Arto and Hagop Kouyoujians, as well as theology student Mihran Kupeyan, temporarily offered their services. In 1975, the Armenian Evangelical Church in Sydney had its first ordained minister. A graduate of the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon, Rev. Hovhannes Kevrekian came and served until 1979.

In 1977, the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches came together

to form the Uniting Church of Australia. So, naturally the Armenian Evangelical Church went under the umbrella of the UCA.

Following the resignation of Rev. Kevrekian, again the Church faced a challenging time to provide the service needed. But by God's grace, the Church once again had its spiritual leader in the person of Nazarene minister, Rev. Avedis Philibossian, who not only volunteered to organize the smooth-running of the Church, but also paved the way to other activities and offshoots such as Sunday School and Badaniats (Christian teenagers).

In 1985, the Armenian Evangelical Church moved from Naremburn to its current address in Willoughby, following a generous offer made by the Uniting Church in Australia. Permission was granted to put the timber-built church building and its adjacent brick hall to good use.

In 1986, Rev. Philibossian resigned and the Church once again suffered the absence of a resident minister until the arrival of Rev. Dr. Hovhannes Karjian from the Middle East in 1988. During the lull, pastors and brothers from other churches, Arto and Hagop Kouyoujians and Baghdasar Kalenderian, offered their services to keep the Church doors open.

Rev. Karjian's ministries were many and varied in both the enrichment of the congregation's soul and the day-to-day running of our church. Also, the desire to have a new, brick-built building with Armenian motifs was mostly a concept of his, which he set out to organize with fervour. It wasn't until 1996, though, that this house of worship was constructed. By then, of course, the Armenian Evangelical Church had welcomed three more ministers. Rev. Avedis Hassessian's (from the United States) pastoral duties extended from 1991 to 1993. It was during his time the church applied for membership to the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of the Near East. Time has proven how constructive and beneficial this has been to the identity and reinforcement of our church.

Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian arrived in Sydney (from Lebanon) in 1993 and was inducted on November 21, 1993. Rev. Youmshajekian has been the longest serving pastor in the history of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Australia. His ministry was characterized by his administrative abilities, teaching and preaching. He organized the 40th Anniversary of the Church. With his involvement in the Armenian Community, he established friendships and has been recognized as one of the community leaders. Also, with his active involvement in the Uniting Church, he has established links with UCA church leaders and has been and still is in the cross-cultural ministry of the UCA. During his ministry and tireless efforts, the foundation stone was put, the building of the New Church Sanctuary was built and inaugurated and dedicated on November 10, 1996 in the name of the Prime Minister of Australia John Howard. Rev. Youmshajekian was instrumental, along with a handful of young members, in building the Minister's Residence and almost fully rebuilding the hall. The building was named the Avedis Soghomonian Hall and was officially opened on February 9, 2003. Both the New Church Sanctuary and the adjacent Hall projects were remarkable achievements. It is also worth mentioning that during years of ministry, the Church organized a series of functions and activities, several of which such as The Little Virtuosos and Nor Yerk musical bands' musical concerts, memorable Holy Land Tour in 2000 and Historical Armenian Tour in 2006, were highly appreciated by the community at large.

After serving 17 years, Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian moved to another place-



Sydney Church Youth.



50th Anniversary Worship Service of the Armenian Evangelical Uniting Church of Sydney.

ment within the Uniting Church, as a recognized Minister of the Word. Currently he serves in the St. Andrew's Uniting Church.

On October 27, 2010 Rev. Hagop Sarkisian arrived from Beirut and was inducted on December 19, to provide his services and continues to do so. His ministry is characterized by providing spiritual leadership, preaching and teaching. Rev. Sarkessian's ministry included welcoming newcomers and Syrian Armenian refugees since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in 2011. He has been instrumental in welcoming and encouraging them to become active members in the Church. During his ministry he organized the 50th Anniversary of the Church and presided over two major presentations. On October 18, 2014, a musical concert titled "An Armenian Journey," was dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Genocide and performed by well-known artist and opera mezzo soprano singer and church member Miss Natalie Aroyan. And, on March 12, 2016, a theatrical presentation titled "You want to Live?" with young and old members of the church. On October 8, 2017, the inauguration and unveiling of a Khatchkar specially made and delivered from Armenia took place. Rev. Sarkessian led a second Holy Land Tour in 2019 for the members of the Church. He continues his faithful service in the Church.

We also cannot forget the many distinguished guests and speakers we've had from different parts of the world who have shared God's word and blessings with us on different occasions. Guests who have visited us upon the Church's invitation over the years are: Dr. Kenel Tourian, Rev. Hovhannes Karjian, Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, Representatives of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, which included Andy and Rose Torigian, Albert and Esther Momjian, Joyce and Joe Stein, Rev. Mrgrdich Melkonian, Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian, His Holiness Karekin the First Catholicos of all Armenians, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bailey, Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Rev. Nerses Balabanian, Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian, His Beatitude Hovhannes Bedros XVIII Kasparian Armenian Catholic Patriarch, Poet Jacques Hagopian, Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian and Rev. Kirkor Ağabaloğlu. And during Rev. Sarkessian's ministry: Zaven Khanjian, Rev. Calvin Sagherian, John Sagherian, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian and Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian (for the second time). We feel privileged to have had the opportunity to meet with them. All glories go to Him.

We express our gratitude to each and every person, whether clergy or otherwise, who has, since the foundation of the Church, assisted in its growth and expansion. Their endeavors and input are appreciated. May the Lord bless them all. ☺



Khachkar in memory of the one and a half million Armenians who perished during the 1915 Armenian Genocide placed at the courtyard of Sydney Church by the Purzekian family.



Family Camp of the Armenian Evangelical Uniting Church of Sydney.



Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Eurasia

History at a Glance

By Rev. René Léonian, Ph.D.*

In 1994, Rev. René Léonian, the newly appointed Armenia Representative of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC) and the French organization "Hope for Armenia," began to establish extensive ties with the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Georgia and Russia. After several visits to the mentioned countries, the relations gradually expanded and deepened. A year later at the General Assembly

of Pastors in Yerevan, which was convened on August 21, 1995, Rev. Léonian was elected President of the newly formed Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia (UAECE).

On August 23, 1995, the UAECE addressed the President of the AEWC, Rev. Hovhannes Karjian, requesting a discussion of the membership of the UAECE in the AEWC at the forthcoming meeting of the Council. In October of the same year, the UAECE became a member of the AEWC.



Pastors and Christian Education workers of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia. L to R: Preacher Armen Ghukasyan (Armavir/Krasnodar), Rev. Masis Akopyan (Moscow), Arman Badalyan (Moscow), Gurgen Poghosyan (St. Petersburg), Merujan Saharyan (Akhalkalak), Rev. Dr. René Léonian (President UAECE), Rev. Valeri Zakarian (Akhalkalak), Virap Hakopyan (Sochi), Rev. Sasun Karakhanian (Sochi and Sukhumi/Abkhazia), Rev. Karen Khachatrian (Tbilisi).

The Goal of the Union

1. To conduct research to determine the number of Armenian Evangelical families and attendees of Armenian Evangelical Churches in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union countries. Contribute to their spiritual and material well-being and the satisfaction of their needs. Assist these communities with spiritual literature if needed. Organize the visits of the pastors of the Armenian Evangelical Churches to the Armenian Evangelical families in the given areas, as well as to create means for their spiritual work in the given areas, if necessary. To help them establish and develop ties with the Motherland. Organize spiritual and cultural events in cooperation with the Armenian Apostolic Church in order to promote spiritual awakening.

2. To create favorable conditions for the member churches and organizations, as members of the same confessional family, to promote Christian communication, cooperation and mutual assistance.

3. To provide means for member churches to train pastors, preachers, and leaders in Scriptures, theology, and Armenian national education.

4. To develop fraternal and practical close ties with the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Mother See of Holy Etchmidzor, as well as with other churches in favor of the Armenian ecclesiastical-national unity.

The highest body of the UAECE is the Conference of the Union, which convenes once a year. It consists of the ordained pastors of the member churches of the Union, church delegates, and representatives of its organizations.

The UAECE was established on the initiative and the vision of Rev. Dr. René Léonian, and the Executive Director of the AMAA Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian (1987-2000).

The Areas of the Main Service of the UAECE are:

MOSCOW, RUSSIA

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Moscow has been operating since 1993. Reverend Vahan Frangyan was the Pastor. Meanwhile, Bible study groups were formed in Moscow with the support of the AMAA and with the participation of Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan and Armenia.

In 2009, The Armenian Christian Evangelical Church of Moscow (ACECM), founded on May 5, 2002, joined the local Armenian Evangelical Church. The ACECM was founded by the guidance of the Lord, with the vision of Karpis Topchyan, Arman Badalyan and Masis Hakobyan.

Masis Hakobyan was officially ordained as Pastor of ACECM in 2009. Rev. Hakobyan was born on October 6, 1978, in Shahumyanovsk village of Shahumyan region in Karabakh. He graduated from the TCMI International Christian Institute in Austria with a Master's Degree in Practical Service.

In addition to Sunday services at the central church, weekly house-to-house services are held in four different districts of Moscow. The Armenian Evangelical Church in Moscow has recently established regular church services in the cities of NaroFominsk,

Tardon, Ryazan, Lipetsk and Kursk in the region.

SOCHI, RUSSIA

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Sochi began to form in 1994. Before that, the local Armenians attended the Russian Evangelical Church, the Pastor of which was Rev. Ivan Chekhunov. Some time later, with the Pastor's encouragement, the Armenians attending the Church formed a group, led by Sasun Karakhanyan, that began to have worship services in Armenian. Later in March 1997, the group was officially recognized as a separate church. In the same year, Sasun Karakhanyan was ordained the Pastor of the Church.

Today the Church has 50 members and supporters and the present Pastor is Rev. Sasun Karakhanyan. Services are held in the church every Sunday. Church members visit evangelical groups based in the villages of Vasilyevsa, Kruevo-Armyamsky. Two people from Sochi graduated from the Evangelical Theological Academy of Armenia.

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Sochi has expanded its service to Khosda, Adler, Volkonka, Lazarsk and other districts.

ARMAVIR, RUSSIA

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Armavir is relatively young, its history began in December of 2015, when the President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia Rev. Dr. René Léonian, and the Pastor of Sochi Rev. Sasun Karakhanyan visited Armavir. They met with local

Armenian and Russian believers. As a result of the meetings, services started in homes under the leadership of the Pastor Armen Ghukasyan.

In November 2019, weekly services began. Home group services and visits continue.

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

The group of Armenian believers in St. Petersburg was formed after 3 years of evangelism, visits and prayers, through the efforts of Gurgen Poghosyan, an evangelist who moved from Armenia to St. Petersburg.

In 2016, a decisive visit was paid by the President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia Rev. Dr. René Léonian, and two pastors of the Union Rev. Sasun Karakhanyan and Rev. Masis Hakobyan. This visit formed the small church and gave it the confidence to proceed. And the membership in the Eurasian Union, which took place in 2019, after a year of having observer status, it further strengthened that trust.

The Armenian Evangelical Church of St. Petersburg has 25 members and the Pastor is the Rev. Gurgen Poghosyan.

SUKHUMI, ABKHAZIA

There were Armenian Evangelicals in Sukhumi even before the 1917 revolution. The Armenian Evangelical Church was founded here in 1960 by the efforts of 17 believers. The first Pastor was Rev. Ghevond Nalbandyan. He was succeeded by Rev. Onik Konolyan, then Rev. Miiran Torosyan. Since 2018, church services and



Armenian Evangelical Church of Moscow, Russia.



Armenian Evangelical Church of Sochi, Russia.

other ministries are coordinated by the visiting pastor, and the Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Sochi, Rev. Sasun Karakhanyan.

TBILISI, GEORGIA

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Tbilisi was founded in the early 1880s. The first Pastor was Rev. Abraham Amirkhanyan and he conducted services in Armenian, Russian and German, as needed. Rev. Amirkhanyan preached the Gospel in Shushi, Baku, Shamakh and other regions. Famous authors such as Grigor Artsruni and Raffi praised the spiritual service of Rev. Amirkhanyan. After Rev. Amirkhanyan passed away in 1913, the Pastors of the Church respectively were Margar Ter-Asaduryan, Nerves Harutyunyan, Swedish L. Larton, Hovsep Khanoyan, Dr. Usher, Martiros Ter-Sahakyan, Hovhannes Margaryan, Tigran Apaghyan, Hovsep Zakaryan, Asir Asiryan, Asatur Harutyunyan, Suren Harutyunyan, Mkrtich Khachaturyan and Alexander Minasyan.

Today, Rev. Karen Khachaturyan is the Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Tbilisi. He began his service in 1997 in the camps organized by the Armenian Missionary Association of America as a leader, and Assistant Pastor to Rev. Alexander Minasyan.

Camps were organized in the Pasanaur and Kojor districts.

In addition to his service in the church between 1999-2005, Karen Khachaturyan graduated from the Evangelical Theological Academy of Armenia.

Trainings were held for church servants under the leadership of Rev. Vigen Galustyan from the USA. He also facilitated a charity canteen between 2000 and 2007, benefitting 60 people.

In 2006, Karen Khachaturyan was ordained a pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Tbilisi, through the efforts of whom visits to different regions of Georgia are organized, worship services are held, and spiritual literature is distributed.

JAVAKHK REGION Gumburdo

The Gumburdo Church was founded in 1990 by a group of 4-6 people on the initiative of Valeri Zakaryan. The first baptism took place on July 24, 1992, and 22 people were baptized.

Akhalkalak

The first small gathering took place in 1995. Until 2004, believers worshiped in a rented apartment. In 2004, with the help of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, an office was opened, in a space provided to the Armenian Evangelical Church for worship and general services.

Sulda

Early in the year 2000, a small group of evangelicals was formed in the village of Sulda. By the end of the year, 10 people had already been baptized there. Currently there is worship, visits, Bible studies, and the "Good Samaritan" program is distributing aid to the lower grades at the school.

Akhalsikhe

The Akhalsikhe Church was founded in 1990 with the help of the Armenian Evangelical brothers of Tbilisi. Ten people were baptized between 1990 and 1992. There are Sunday services at church, visitations, a Sunday school, Bible studies, outdoor summer camps, hot meals are given to some of the elderly, and the "Good Samaritan" program distributes aid to school and kindergarten children.

The Pastor of the churches of the regions of Javakhk (the regional center of Akhalkalaki, the neighboring villages of Akhalsikhe, Gumburdo and Sulda) is Rev. Valeri Zakaryan. In 1992 he was ordained as a deacon, and then as a pastor in 1996. He studied at the Tbilisi Theological Seminary and is assisted by three preachers: Kamo Mghedesyan, Meruzhan Saharyan and Sasun Margaryan.

The following is a general description of the services of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia

WORSHIP

Sunday services are held in all the Union churches. Believers of the Armenian Evangelical Churches actively participate in worship. They read the Bible, pray, sing songs, hymns, share their personal Christian testimony, and listen to meditations and sermons.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Union churches highly appreciate the role of Christian Education in the



Armenian Evangelical Church of Tbilisi, Georgia.



Armenian Evangelical Church of Akhalkalak in Javakhk Region.

upbringing of the younger generation and adults. They strive so all the believers receiving this education will grow in all walks of life (intellectual, social and caring), and become worthy children of our nation. For this purpose, Bible studies are organized for all age groups: teenagers, young adults and married couples. These studies help gain true Christian knowledge and appreciate the recognition and application of Christian values in the life of the individual.

SUMMER CAMPS

Children enjoy recreation, eat healthy food and make new friends. Hundreds of children participate in camps every year.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Every year at Christmas and the New Year, festive activities are organized in the above-mentioned churches, with the participation of children. During the holidays, the birth of Jesus is celebrated with joy. His birth continues to unite humanity around the noble concepts of divine love, peace, honesty and justice. Gifts are distributed to children everywhere. Churches are gradually expanding their areas of service and content.

APPENDIX

- Since the 1990s, the Armenian Missionary Association of America has always focused on supporting Eurasian Union programs.



AMAA Center in Akhalkalak (Javakhk Region).

- The Eurasian Union and the Union of Evangelical Churches of Armenia jointly established the Evangelical Theological Academy of Armenia in 1997.
- The Eurasian Union organizes an annual conference for pastors and lay leaders in either Russia or Georgia.
- With the help of the UAECA and the AMAA, the Union's pastors regularly participate in inter-church meetings and international youth camps in Armenia and elsewhere.
- On May 25, 2019, on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian

Missionary Association of America, a concert-event organized by the Eurasian Union was held in Moscow attended by AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian and his wife Sona. 



*** Rev. Dr.
René Léonian**
is the President
of the Union of
the Armenian
Evangelical
Churches in Eurasia.



Children at Sochi Church.



Children at St. Petersburg Church.

Christian Witnessing



Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

Mark 16:15

Biblical Guidelines to Follow

By Mihran Jizemjian*

We praise God, glorify His name, and respectfully remember our founding fathers and mothers, 37 men and three women on the 175th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Movement and Establishment of the Armenian Evangelical Church. Against all odds, facing various difficulties, persecutions and even death, they courageously lit up the torch of Evangelicalism among our people on July 1, 1846.

After the Armenian Genocide of 1915, the Armenian Evangelical Church lost many of its churches, schools, ministers and lay leaders. However, through the vision and wisdom of a group of Armenian Evangelical Ministers and Lay Leaders, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was founded on June 7, 1918 in Worcester, MA and on March 7, 1984, the Armenian Missionary Association of Canada (AMAC), the Canadian arm of the Association, was founded in Toronto. The purpose of the AMAA's founding was *"To strengthen the spiritual life of our churches and to rebuild the ruined churches of the fatherland."*

The Biblical admonition to instruct the children early in their lives *"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it"* Proverbs 22:6 has been one of the key principles that our Christian parents have been obedient to. And what a difference it has made in our lives. I personally feel blessed and praise God for having such God-fearing parents, who have been great assets and role models for me. I owe a great deal to their ceaseless prayers and exemplary lives and guidance.

Worship, Social Services, Missions and Evangelism have been at the forefront of our activities during the 175-year history of our churches, as well as of the AMAA and AMAC. Let us continue to be faithful to our upbringing and shining brightly our lights, obey the Great Commission given by Jesus our Lord, *"To go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always to the very end of the age."* Matthew 28:19-20.

Another area we should be willing to cultivate in our lives as followers of Jesus, is to be merciful and ready to lend a helping hand to the needy and the oppressed. During these difficult times when the cost of living is so high and has almost hit the roof, and many of our brothers and sisters do not have enough to take care of their family's everyday needs, let us be more loving and willing to share generously from what our merciful God has abundantly given us, literally following these guidelines from the Bible.

"A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor." "Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, for the Lord will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them." Proverbs 22: 9, 22-23.

"Suppose someone has enough to live and sees a brother or a sister in need but does not help. Then God's love is not living in that person. My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring." 1 John 3:17-18.

God's word is crystal clear; it encourages and puts upon us the responsibility to do our best in alleviating the pain and suffering around us.

Let us all pledge to continue our services wherever the needs are and share the Gospel of Good News with our words and exemplary lives to all. Our daily prayer must be: *"Help us O Lord to be worthy of our Christian callings."*

"Praise the Lord O my soul; All my inmost being, praise His Holy Name."
Psalm 100:1



* **Mihran Jizemjian**
is the current Chair
and immediate Past
President of AMAC.



Clear-thinking Family Members on the Homeland's Soil

By Dr. Yervant H. Kassouny*

In coming face-to-face with the 175th Anniversary of the formation of the Armenian Evangelical Church* the first thing demanded of the Armenian Evangelical individual is to engage in a seriously considered self-critique in the light of the evolution of that church's history. Taking the 100th Anniversary as a starting point, today one must ask, 75 years on, "Where were we then? Where are we now?" This accounting must be done with the precise scrutiny used by one struggling to close the year's business accounts down to the very last penny.

The starting point of this seriously considered self-critique begins with an awareness of owning the true meaning and heritage contained in the word "Armenian" (Hayasdanyaits).

When, after a three-decade delay, the Armenian Evangelical Church formulates its return to the Homeland, it must therefore be faithful to its obligation to fully commit to being rightful family members. But first a clarification: an Armenian Evangelical individual who is a true member of this household must not be limited to his church's evangelistic calls of "Repent!" or the benevolences it hands out. A true household member will not only have an awareness of land, blood, history, culture and traditions, *but must also take responsibility for them*, so that, as the outcome of his overall work, *he will be able to add his personal signature to the portion he has contributed to the accumulated inheritance of that land and people.*

Only by taking on its *true Christian visage and mission* can the Armenian Evangelical Church fulfill its obligation to open itself to the world and enter into it. This is where an understanding of the Armenian Evangelical Community and the community itself must take shape. The community must be built around and by the church in order to have an all-embracing Armenian Christian form with its own personality and worldview, which it must use to clarify the national, political, religious, social and public atmosphere in Armenia. Here, along-

side the pulpit, there is the urgency for the community to state its own views in its own publication. The absence of one's own publication is the first step toward decline.

It is no secret that any reality has the need of a visible, physical presence. Advertisements in any sphere – political, public, religious, business/economic, cultural or athletic – are nothing more than a reinforcement of one's physical existence. In this sense, the Armenian Evangelical Church, for its part, must have in Armenia's capital city, Yerevan, a physical structure asserting its existence: an ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL COMPLEX. This Complex should include a church structure built in an impressive Armenian style, a library, an exhibition gallery, a concert hall, a printing house, and offices for all its areas of service. Why should Armenia's secondary cities have proper church buildings but not Yerevan? To put it more simply, the underground concert hall of the fanciest building cannot be an Armenian church structure of an Armenian Church. This Complex must be a center of Christian faith and Armenian culture. There, in one place, the creative heritage of generations of Armenian Evangelicals will be gathered, becoming in its turn the most important center for studying the history and heritage of the Armenian Evangelical Church and the Armenian Evangelical Community. This Complex will also set the direction of the Armenian Evangelical Churches and the Armenian Evangelical Community's character, declaring its identity to anyone who asks.

This Complex, embracing the mission expected of it, first must serve the Armenian Evangelical Church and Community, enabling it to open up new horizons, which can be realized by living out necessary new reforms.

Additionally, as a center of the Armenian Evangelical Church and Community, this Complex will be a creative presence, being a driving force on the path of progress today and tomorrow, paving a healthy pathway of dialogue and interactions on the soil of Armenia and for the Armenian people.

The 175th Anniversary is not a time for self-congratulation for the accomplishments of the past. Note the thoughts of that specialist of Armenian Evangelical history, the renowned Rev. Prof. Yeghia S. Kassouny, given on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary: "... boasting of the past is inadequate. [...] Self-satisfaction and self-approval, not to say self-deception, is the most harmful affliction of all. What will our future be? This is the essential issue to decide for our church at this completion of a century.

"The future is primarily determined by the present." [Lousashavigh (Path of Light), p. 501]

We believe that at this time – today – at this 175th Anniversary jubilee, the most fitting triumph would be the decision to develop a plan to construct an Armenian Evangelical Complex and to implement that action. That practical realization would be a celebratory opening of that pathway for the future progress of Armenian Evangelicalism in Armenia in particular.

The construction and guarantee of the activity of an Armenian Evangelical Complex will happen with the sponsorship of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, a publicity drive within all Armenian Evangelical churches, and the organizing of a campaign for an Armenian Evangelical Complex Fund to provide resources for wise investments and disbursements.

The future begins today. Tomorrow will be too late. ☺

* Transl. note: "Armenian Evangelical Church" appearing throughout is translated from the Armenian, "Hayasdanyaits Avedaranagan Yegeghetsi," and refers to the name that was chosen by the church at its founding in 1846.

January 20, 2022, Beirut, Lebanon
(Translated from Armenian by Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian. The original Armenian text is on page 45).



* Dr. Yervant H. Kassouny is a historian, author, and former editor of *Chanasser*.

Standing Together in Ministry: AMAA and UAECNE

By Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian*

The leadership of the Armenian Missionary Association of America held a meeting in Beirut, Lebanon with the Central Committee of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) on Thursday, May 5, 2022. For the past two years, the AMAA has been unable as a group to visit partners in the Middle East in person, (although Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian and his wife paid a special visit to Beirut last year) so this year marked a special opportunity for expressing mutual solidarity in the joint endeavors in the Middle East. AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian and AMAA's Near East Committee Chair Berjouhy Gulessarian traveled to Beirut with their spouses especially for this meeting, which coincided with other UAECNE events. Joining the meeting virtually from the U.S. were Near East Committee members Stephen Philibosian Foundation Chair Joyce Stein and AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian.

After opening the meeting with a prayer for guidance, Central Committee Chair and Acting UAECNE President Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian outlined not only the multifaceted and growing areas of service the UAECNE is rendering through its member churches in seven different Middle Eastern countries, as well as Australia, but also the great existential challenges the Union encounters at every turn. Despite it all, the witness of the Armenian Evangelical Church continues to be expressed in its educational system, the receiving of new young church members, overseeing the theological training of students from the Middle East as well as Armenia at NEST, the prayerful support of new ministry initiatives in places such as Iraq, and much more. Along with these new endeavors is the ongoing work of the Christian Social Center for many families in need of nutritional, educational, housing and especially medical support, for which the AMAA plays a central role in financing.



L to R: Pastor Hagop Akbasharian, Rev. Hrayr Cholakian, Rev. Selim Sabounji, Garbis Deyirmenjian, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, AMAA Near East Committee Chair Berjouhy Gulessarian, Rev. Dr. Haroutune Selimian, Pastor Datev Basmajian and Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian.

For his part, Central Committee Vice Chair and Armenian Protestant Community Head in Syria Rev. Dr. Haroutune Selimian described the burgeoning ministries of Armenian Evangelical churches, schools and social services there, while also acknowledging the ongoing struggle to maintain these programs in the face of the economic pressures the country is forced to endure. While expressing his joy at filling two empty Armenian Evangelical pulpits, he also pointed out that their social, medical, educational and spiritual ministry extends to the entire Syrian Armenian community without discrimination.

A foundational principle of the Armenian Evangelical Church, to provide quality education in a Christian environment, presents one of the greatest dilemmas, especially in today's Lebanon. Central Committee Treasurer Garbis Deyirmenjian described how the collapsed banking system and teetering economy are wreaking havoc with schools' budgetary planning, low teachers' salaries, family income and more. Yet, with the unwavering commitment of the AMAA and other international partners, these institutions are faithfully carrying on their work and seeing their enrollment increase, as they focus on God's call and His faithful-

ness. To illustrate, the Armenian Evangelical School in Anjar is not only continuing its vital boarding school program, but will soon publish a cutting-edge, electronic curriculum that teaches both science and agriculture in the Western Armenian language, something other Armenian schools throughout the world will also be able to use.

After together considering these and many other topics, AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian concluded the meeting, saying that despite the difficulties the UAECNE faces in maintaining a Christian and Armenian presence throughout the region, "Never forget—we stand with you." The long-awaited meeting then closed with Rev. Selimian's prayer of dedication. ☮



* **Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian** is the Coordinator of Church Relations of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East. Rev. Bakalian's ministry in Lebanon is supported jointly by the Armenian Missionary Association of America and the Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

UKRAINIAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

AMAA Reaches out to Ukrainian Armenian Refugees

Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Matthew 25:40

Another Armenian Diaspora community is in peril. This time it is the long-standing Armenian community of Ukraine. The war in Ukraine has resulted in a humanitarian disaster and urgent aid is needed to help Armenian victims of this war. Many individuals and families from Ukraine have sought refuge in safe havens established on the borders of neighboring countries, such as Poland, Bulgaria and Romania.

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), after actively assessing the situation through its wide network within the Armenian Evangelical Fellowship of Europe and mission partners in Bulgaria, is reaching out to the Armenian refugees who have fled Ukraine and have sought safe havens in Bulgaria. The Armenian Evangelical Churches of Bulgaria, headed by Rev. Bedros Altunian and Pastor Nerses Ketikian, the pastors of the Varna Church, are working on a daily basis to provide much needed critical assistance and humanitarian support to the displaced people as quickly as possible. Most of the refugees in Bulgaria are settled in a boarding house in Varna where they are provided with food, medical assistance and other needs. Special arrangements and assistance is offered to those moving to Armenia and settling in the Homeland.

On Easter Sunday April 17 at 1 pm, a special Easter Worship Service was held at the Armenian Evangelical Methodist Church of Varna with a large number of church members in attendance as well as the Ukrainian Armenian refugees who currently have found refuge in the city. Hymns and songs of praise were sung during the Service with scripture readings and a special message about the mystery of the resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ delivered by Pastor Nerses Ketikian, Pastor of Varna Church. The Service concluded with the Benediction offered by Rev. Bedros Altunian, Senior Pastor of Varna Church

and the Chairman of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Bulgaria (UAEBC). It was an emotional experience for all.

After the Worship Service, a special Easter Luncheon was held for about 230 people participated, 150 of whom were Ukrainian refugees. The honorary guests at the Luncheon were the Chairman of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Bulgaria Rev. Bedros Altunian, the Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Romania and Bulgaria Bishop Datev Hagopian, Fr. Yeznig Torkomian from Romania, the Chairman of the Parish Council of St. Sarkis Church Masis Baghdadian, the Chairman of the Union of Armenians of Bulgaria Haroutune Hovsepian, the Chairman of AGBU Varna Chapter Kevork Krikorian, the sponsors of the Luncheon and other dignitaries. Representatives of the Armenian community as well as Ukrainian-Armenian brothers and sisters consistently praised the invaluable service of the AMAA and the Varna Church for the Ukrainian Armenian brothers and sisters.

Pastor Nerses Ketikian is also in touch with the Armenian Embassies and Consulates in the region, spiritual leaders of the Mother Church in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as with the Holy See of Etchmiadzin to coordinate the relief efforts and help those refugees who desire to move to Armenia. 



L to R: Pastor Nerses Ketikian on right with the Chairman of Charity Fund Europe of Bulgaria and the Refugees' coordinator staying at the boarding house.



Children at the boarding house participate in educational activities.



A medical doctor provides free medical examinations to the refugees.



At the Easter Luncheon Bishop Datev Hagopian thanks the AMAA and Varna Church for their outreach to the Ukrainian Armenian refugees. Seated on his right are Fr. Yeznig Torkomian and Rev. Bedros Altunian with other honorary guests.

AMAA in Artsakh

Sewing Courses Launched at AMAA Center in Stepanakert

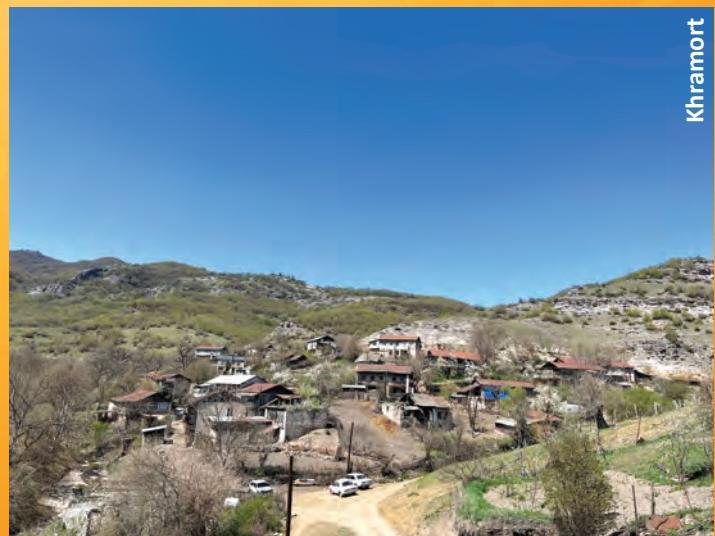


Through the initiative of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), the "Maro Kuyrig" sewing courses project was launched at AMAA's Center in Stepanakert, Artsakh to teach comprehensive sewing skills to the participants.

The purchase of the sewing machines was made possible with a generous donation received from one of our donors whose wish was to improve the participants knowledge with the help of a skilled professional, discover the secrets of this ancient craft and earn income for their daily needs with the help of their own small business.

The people of Artsakh build, create and continue to fight for the future of their Homeland. 

We Must Act Only For the Sake of Tomorrow



Our people of Artsakh are fighting for the right to live on their land, which is an everyday struggle. Visits with social and moral support by AMAA's Artsakh team to the Border villages in Artsakh, such as Khramort and Khnapat, where lives of our compatriots are endangered everyday, gives more hope.

A resident who lost his house in Parookh does not want to have a safe life, but says: "I do not want anything, I want my land, I will sacrifice myself for my land ... I want to go to my house, my home. I lost everything for the second time, but it doesn't matter, only if I can go home, I will create the rest."

Hearts full of pain yet not losing faith, they hope one day there will be peace in Artsakh. 

Central High School Marks Its Centennial

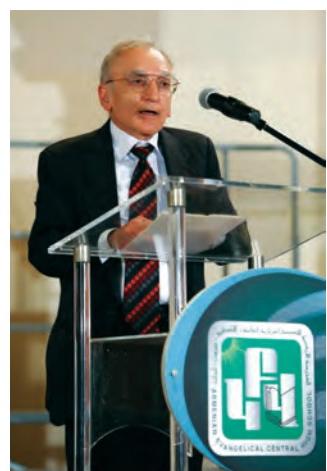
The Armenian Evangelical Central High School is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year. To mark this special occasion, former principals, teachers, alumni and school friends gathered at the Assembly Hall of the American University of Beirut on Saturday, May 7, to attend a special celebration of this milestone. The School choir, the Alumni choir and the musical performances gave a different shine to this jubilee celebration. The main speaker of the day was former Principal Artun Hamalian, whose inspiring message encouraged all to continue to the second centenary with double vigor.

AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian attended the event and brought the Association's greetings. Principal Maral Deyirmenjian honored the guest speaker, the School's Board of Trustees Chair Pauline Sagherian and Dr. Darakjian with souvenirs and the performers with flowers. The event concluded with UAECNE Chair Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian's Benediction.

It is indeed a miracle that the survivors of the Armenian Genocide with vision and faith, in unspeakable conditions and with a donation from the AMAA (see photo on the back page) built a wooden school where children of the remnants of the Armenian Genocide would gather and study. Through its 100 years of educational history, this unique institution has managed to produce over 1,800 graduates into the Armenian community and then into the whole humanity.

We congratulate the Armenian Evangelical Central High School for this milestone and wish a hundred and more fruitful years of educating our youngsters following the Scripture to "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:7

Standing firm in its Christian faith and mission, the AMAA is committed to stand by and support the Global Armenian Evangelical schools.



Principal Maral Deyirmenjian.

Dr. Nazareth Darakjian.



Dr. Souzy Ohanian Named Principal of C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School

Dr. Souzy Ohanian, a lifelong educator with more than 30 years of experience in administrative leadership and elementary and middle school instruction, has been appointed to the position of Principal of C. & E. Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School in Sherman Oaks, CA. She will begin serving in her new role at the start of the 2022–2023 academic year.

Dr. Ohanian brings with her a decades-long career in educational leadership during which she has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to students' high academic achievement and personal growth and has prioritized faculty and staff development with remarkable success. Most recently, she served as Assistant Principal of Elementary at Rose & Alex Pilibos Armenian School in Los Angeles, where she was instrumental in directing school operations, including program planning and implementation, staff hiring and evaluation, strategic planning and community outreach.

Dr. Ohanian holds a Doctor of Education in K–12 curriculum and instruction, a Master of Fine Arts in K–12 education/teacher education, a Master of Fine Arts in K–12 educational leadership and politics, a Bachelor of Arts in liberal studies, and a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential.

We welcome Dr. Ohanian to the Merdinian family and pray for God's guidance as she starts her new role and leadership at Merdinian.

Established in 1982 by the AMAA and the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, the C. & E. Merdinian School is the only Armenian Evangelical School in North America. The School offers a broad-based curriculum that fosters academic excellence, high moral values, and spiritual enrichment in the Armenian Evangelical tradition. The School strives to create a safe and nurturing environment where every student receives personal attention to become a successful and responsible individual.

The AMAA, the cornerstone of Armenian education for many decades, supports 22 Armenian Evangelical schools around the world including the Merdinian School. The schools provide an educational, spiritual and cultural setting for over 2,800 students each year. The AMAA remains dedicated to providing our children an education and the opportunity toward a more promising future.



Rev. Ağabaloğlu Meets with Patriarch Sahak II Mashalian To Discuss Camp Armen Reconstruction Plans

On Thursday, April 28, 2022, Rev. Kirkor Ağabaloğlu, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Gedikpaşa, Istanbul met with His Eminence, Bishop Sahak II Mashalian, Patriarch of Constantinople, and discussed plans for the reconstruction of Camp Armen. Also present was Archbishop Lévon Zékiyan, the spiritual leader of Turkey's Armenian Catholic community.

Rev. Ağabaloğlu explained the reconstruction process of Camp Armen and asked His Eminence and His Excellency to give their moral support to this project, as well as to call on individuals in their communities to contribute as much as they can as a sign of unity. "Even though the owner of Camp Armen is the Armenian Evangelical Church of Gedikpaşa, it does not mean that Armenian sister communities would not have a say in the operation and service of this Camp, as the children of all the Armenian communities will use this Center without discrimination," said Rev. Ağabaloğlu during the discussions.

During the meeting, they spoke with gratitude and satisfaction about the State's ordinance, according to which it was possible that Camp Armen would be returned to the Armenian Evangelical Church in Gedikpaşa. They also decided to hold a follow-up meeting to discuss the Camp's administrative status so that everything would have a legal status. ☩



AMAA Donates Sharoyan's "Literary Scroll with the Alphabet" Book to Armenian Language Teachers in Armenian Schools in North America

With Armenian Missionary Association of America's (AMAA) encouragement and sponsorship, a guidebook of Western Armenian orthography and punctuation, entitled "A Literary Inspired Scroll with the Letters of the Alphabet" was recently published in Aleppo, Syria. The author of the book is the renowned Aleppo-Armenian writer, press contributor and pedagogic tiller, Levon Sharoyan.

The volume, though by its nature can be considered primarily a grammatical work, has been written in an accessible language and can be read like a perusal volume, for any Armenian-born who desires to improve the mastery of his mother tongue and get acquainted with the rules of her orthography. However, it will be useful specifically to the Armenian teachers of the Diaspora, students of the upper grades and scholars of Armenianological institutes.

The main aim of the work is to remedy as far as possible our orthographical errors and point out ways to overcome the orthographical obstacles arising from homophonous letters. However, the book also has two other aspects: Glossology and Punctuation. About 20 pages of the 156-page book is devoted to the punctuation marks of Armenian, explain in detail the rules and spheres of utility of each mark and provide numerous impressive examples for all of them.

The AMAA, which in its centennial history has always and continually stood by the Armenian school and the Armenian student, donated a copy of this book to each Armenian language teacher in our schools in North America (US and Canada) with the belief that this newly published grammar book will benefit the rebirth and vitality of Western Armenian, and place a useful tool in the hands of our Armenian-speaking and Armenian-writing public.

If there are any Armenian Schools in North America that have not yet to date received copies of this book for their Armenian language teachers, please contact Louisa Janbazian at amaanews@amaa.org.

Individuals who are interested in this book can purchase a copy from the AMAA's online Bookstore at: amaa.org/featuredbooks/ ☩





AMAA welcomes US President Joe Biden's Statement on this day, April 24, 2022, the 107th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Turks, reaffirming his recognition of the atrocities and calling the massacres of one and a half million Armenians as Genocide. Thank you, President Biden, for your courage and superb moral standard.

"On April 24, 1915, Ottoman authorities arrested Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Constantinople. Thus began the Armenian Genocide—one of the worst mass atrocities of the 20th century. Today, we remember the one and a half million Armenians who were deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths in a campaign of extermination, and mourn the tragic loss of so many lives.

As we reflect on the Armenian Genocide, we renew our pledge to remain vigilant against the corrosive influence of hate in all its forms. We recommit ourselves to speaking out and stopping atrocities that leave lasting scars on the world. And, as we mourn what was lost during the *Medz Yeghern*, let us redouble our efforts toward healing and building the better, more peaceful world that we wish for our children. A world where human rights are respected, where the evils of bigotry and intolerance do not mark our daily lives, and where people everywhere are free to pursue their lives in dignity and security.

This is also a moment to reflect on the strength and resiliency of the Armenian people. After enduring a Genocide, the Armenian people were determined to rebuild their community and their culture, so often in new homes and new lands, including the United States. Armenian Americans are a vital part of the fabric of the United States. They make our nation stronger and more dynamic, even as they continue to carry with them the tragic knowledge of what their ancestors endured. We recognize their pain and honor their story.

Today, 107 years later, the American people continue to honor all Armenians who perished in the Genocide."

SAVE THE DATE



**AMAA 103rd ANNUAL MEETING BANQUET
"EMPOWERING AMAA'S GLOBAL MISSION"**
HONORING
AMA CANADA, AMA AUSTRALIA,
HOPE FOR ARMENIA – FRANCE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2022 – RECEPTION 6 PM • DINNER 7 PM

Hilton Hasbrouck Heights/Meadowlands Hotel, 650 Terrace Ave., Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604

AMAA Sundays Celebrated in AEUNA Churches in North America

The Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena, CA celebrated AMAA Sunday on Sunday, March 6, 2022. Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, AMAA President, was the guest speaker. During the Worship Service, Dr. Darakjian spoke about AMAA's ministries around the world, explaining the Association's various programs and activities especially in Armenia, Artsakh and Middle East and the plans to help Ukrainian Armenian Refugees. Dr. Darakjian also gave the Armenian Message during the Worship Service which was based on the topic Disciple or Apostle? "To be an Apostle," he said, "we must first believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and receive the Holy Spirit in our lives. As Apostles, our mission begins in our churches and in our immediate environment. If we go out of our churches, we will meet thousands of people who neither know God nor have heard or accepted the Good News of Christ in their lives. The children of our Armenian Christian nation. We become Apostles when we are willing to give of our material support to God's work."



AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian and Rev. Serop Megerditchian, Pastor of the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena, CA.

And the sad thing is that most of them will be the children of our Armenian Christian nation. We become Apostles when we are willing to give of our material support to God's work."



AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian at Christ Armenian Church in La Crescenta, CA.

news about the various ministries of AMAA all around the world including Armenia and Artsakh.

On Sunday March 6, 2022, AMAA Board Member Dr. Rafi Balabanian visited the **Holy Trinity Armenian Church, North Hollywood, CA**, representing the Association for AMAA Sunday. During the Worship Service, Dr. Balabanian with a PowerPoint Presentation spoke about the outreach programs of the AMAA in 24 countries around the world including Armenia and Artsakh. The topic of Dr. Balabanian's sermon was Church Growth based on Acts 2:43-47.

On Sunday, March 6, 2022 AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian visited the **Christ Armenian Church in La Crescenta, CA** for AMAA Sunday. The topic of Mr. Khanjian's sermon was the Blessings of Giving "Տալու Օրինութիւնը" which was based on the scripture passage John 3:16. In his sermon Mr. Khanjian stressed three points about giving: Giving as a National Commitment; Giving as a Human Value; Giving as a Christian Value. With a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Khanjian also shared extensively



AMAA Board member Dr. Rafi Balabanian and Rev. Dr. Ara Chakerian at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in North Hollywood, CA.

Christian Outreach for Armenians Church of North Hollywood, CA welcomed AMAA Controller Nerves Rastguelenian representing the Association on Sunday, March 6, 2022 for AMAA Sunday. Mr. Rastguelenian preached as well as briefed the Church on the many ministries of AMAA worldwide. He first spoke about how to become a person after God's own heart. He mentioned three aspects of a person after God's own heart: 1. Building a lifestyle that is completely dedicated to the Lord. 2. Structuring a life based on the Word of God. 3. Building a life around the people of God.



AMAA Controller Nerves Rastguelenian at Christian Outreach for Armenians Church of North Hollywood, CA.

On Sunday, March 27, 2022, the **United Armenian Congregational Church of Los Angeles, CA** held a special AMAA In-N-Out lunch immediately following the morning Worship Service. During the Worship Service and the luncheon, AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian spoke about the mission of the Association serving the physical and spiritual needs of our people both at home and overseas.



AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian at the United Armenian Congregational Church of Los Angeles, CA.

After a two-year hiatus **The Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto, ON, Canada** held its annual Missions Sunday service and luncheon, on Sunday May 1, 2022 with over 100 people in attendance. AMAA Representative in Armenia Harout Nercessian was the guest speaker. The topic of Mr. Nercessian's sermon was "Sow, that others may reap." He concluded his sermon with a short video presentation entitled "The Armenian Evangelical



Harout Nercessian at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto.



Andy Loussarian on the left and Harout Nercessian on the right with the Scholarship recipients.

Secondary School of Anjar, an Oasis of Love, Quality Education and Character Building."

During the luncheon, five AMAA scholarship recipients from Aleppo, who had arrived in Toronto during the Syrian war, shared their educational journey thanking the AMAA for enabling them to study and launch professional careers. Also, two participants of the 2018 AMAA Armenia Internship program shared their experience in Armenia and showed a video clip from their time in the Homeland. Mr. Nercessian made a presentation about AMAA's work in Armenia, Artsakh and around the globe asking the audience to consider active engagement in the AMAA's mission with their prayers and support. At the end of the program, Mr. Nercessian presented a photo album from the Vanadzor "Shogh" Center to Mr. and Mrs. Sarkis and Haygouhie Marandjian, for their generous donation for the Center and announced that the Center has been named after them. (see the story below)

Lastly, final remarks were given by Antibas Loussarian who reiterated our duty as followers of Christ to help the least of our brothers and sisters (Matthew 25:40). Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian concluded the luncheon with a prayer of thanks and blessing. ☺



Harout Nercessian presents an album of photos from Vanadzor "Shogh" Center to Mr. & Mrs. Sarkis and Haygouhie Marandjian.

AMAA Dedicates Sarkis and Haygouhie Marandjian "Shogh" Center in Vanadzor

The Armenian Missionary Association of America's "Shogh" Center in Vanadzor was recently named in honor of benefactors Sarkis and Haygouhie Marandjian.

AMAA Armenia held a plaque unveiling ceremony on March 30 at the AMAA Vanadzor Shogh Day Center in honor of the benefactors who are residents of Toronto, Canada. The Marandjians are also members and benefactors of the Armenian Missionary Association of Canada, where Sarkis is a Board member.

AMAA Armenia Representative Harout Nercessian greeted the staff, guests, parents and children in attendance, and expressed his gratitude to the Marandjians, whose generosity will give many children life-impacting educational, social and psychological services.

The children performed a flash mob dance with colored ribbons, which represented the bright colors brought into their lives thanks to the Center: friendship, responsibility, honesty, and other noble human qualities.

Vanadzor "Shogh" Center Coordinator Irina Chakhoyan, as well as the participating children and parents, voiced their profound gratitude to the benefactors for the incredible, positive impact the Marandjian "Shogh" Center has on the children's lives.

The event participants painted the blank canvas with brushstrokes, which when unveiled led into the sketch of a portrait of the Marandjians.





Արդարադատ Տեղիի Ներկայութիւն Մայրենի Հողին Վրայ

Դոկտ. Երուանդ Հ. Քասունի*

Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի կազմաւորման 175-ի դէմ յանդիման, Հայ Աւետարանական մարդէն առաջին հերթին պահանջութած՝ պատմութեան հոլովոյթին ունկնդիր, ինքնարննադատական լրախոնութիւնն է: Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցիի յորեկնական 100-ամեակը մեկնակետ առած, այսօր, եօթանասուն հինգ տարի ետք, հարց պիտի տալ, ո՞ւր էինք, ո՞ւր հասանք: Հաշուեկիոր պիտի կատարուի ամենէն հաջուենկատ առեւտրականի դիտարկութեամբ, որ տարեփակին, իր գործառնութեան վերջին մէկ դահեկանին տագնաապը կ'ապիի:

Ինքնարննադատական լրախոնութեան մեկնակետը՝ «ԱՅԱՑԱՍԱՆԵԱՅՑՅ» խորքային նշանակութեան եւ աւանդին գիտակցական իւրացումն է:

Երբ Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցին երեք տասնամեակներէ ի վեր ուշացած տունդարձ կը կազմակերպէ, ապա ուրեմն՝ հարազատ տնեցիի իր պարտականութիւններուն ամբողջական համոզումին հաւատարմութիւնը պիտի ունենայ: Բայց նախ՝ Հայ Աւետ. մարդու հարազատ տնեցիի ճշդումը, որ չի սահմանափակուիր միայն իր Եկեղեցիի «ապաշխարեցէր» ի աւետարանչութեամբ ու բարեգործութեամբ: Տնեցին՝ <ողին, Արեան, Պատմութեան, Մշակոյթին և Աւանդութիւններուն ոչ միայն զիտակցութիւնը պիտի ունենայ, այլ եւ՝ տիրութիւնը ստանանէ, որպէսզի իր համապարփակ աշխատանքի վաստակով կարենայ <ողին ու Ժողովուրդին կուտակած ժառանգութեան սեփական ստորագրութեամբ իր բաժին յանդումը բերել:

Ոհա թէ ինչու, որպէսզի Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցին ստանայ իր իրաւ քրիստոնէական դիմագիծն ու առաքելութիւնը, պարտի բացուի աշխարհին եւ աշխարհ մտնել: Հոս պիտի ձեւաւորուի Հայ Աւետարանական Համայնքի հասկացողութիւնն ու Հայ Աւետարանական Համայնքը: Եկեղեցիին շուրջ ու Եկեղեցիով պիտի կերտել համայնքը, որ ամբողջական Հայ Քրիստոնէայ կերպարով ունենայ իր սեփական դիմագիծն ու աշխարհայեացը, զոր պարտի օգտագործել՝ երկրին մէջ տիրող ազգային, քաղաքական, կրօնական, ընկերային, հասարակական մթնոլորտը բիւրեղացնելու: Եւ հոս, Եկեղեցիի բնմին կողքին, սեփական խօսք՝ սեփական մամուլի հրամայական ներկայութիւնը: Սեփական մամուլի բացակայութիւնը նահանջի նախարայի է:

Այսօր ոչ որի գալունիք է թէ որեւէ իրողութիւն կարիքը ունի ֆիզիքական աջառու ներկայութեան: Գովազդը իր բոլոր մարզերուն մէջ՝ քաղաքական, հասարակական, կրօնական, առեւտրական-տնտեսական, մշակութային, մարզական, ուրիշ բան չէ, եթէ ոչ ֆիզիքական գոյութեան հաստատումը: Այս առունով, Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցին, իր հերթին, մայրաքաղաք Երեւանի մէջ պիտի ունենայ իր ամրապնդուած գոյութիւնը հաստատող ֆիզիքական կառոյցը՝ ՀԱՅ ԱՐԵՏԱՐԱՄԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՅԱՑԱԼԻՐԸ: Համայիրը, հայկական ոնով կառուցուած շքեղ տաճարով, մատենադարանով, գեղարուեստի ցուցարանով, հանդիսապահով, տպարանով եւ ծառայութեան դաշտին սպասարկող աշխատասենեակներով: Այդ ինչո՞ւ է որ Հայաստանի երկրորդական քաղաքներն ու շրջանները կունենան ներկայանալի Եկեղեցաշնքեր, բայց Երեւանը՝

ոչ: Պարզենք. ամենէն շքեղ կառոյցի քարայրին մէջ բացուած հանդիսապահ Հայ Եկեղեցիի Հայկական Եկեղեցաշնք չի կրնար ըլլա: Համայիրը Քրիստոնէական հաւատքի ու Հայ Մշակոյթի կեղրոն պիտի ըլլա: Հոն պիտի մէկտեղուի նաև Հայ Աւետարանական սերունդներու ստեղծագործական ժառանգութիւնը, իր հերթին դառնապով Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցիի եւ Հայ Աւետ. Համայնքի պատմութեան ու ժառանգութեան սերտողութեան կարեւորագոյն կեղրոնը: Համայիրը նաև պիտի ճշդէ Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցիի ու Հայ Աւետ. Համայնքի դիմագիծը՝ հարց տուողին պատախաններու թէ ո՞ւ ի՞նք է ինք:

Համայիրը, իրմէ ակնկալուած առաքելութեան դէմ յանդիման, առաջին հերթին պիտի ծառայէ Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցիին ու Համայնքին նոր հրիզոնմերու տեսլականը ունենալու, որոնց իրագործման համար՝ նոր բարեկարգումներու իրագործման պարտադիր պահանջը պիտի ապրի:

Համայիրը, նաեւ, իրբեւ Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցիի ու Համայնքի կենդանի, ստեղծագործ ներկայութիւն, հայրենի հողին ու ժողովուրդին այսօրուան ու վաղուան նուաճումներուն համար մղուող պայքարի ճանապարհին՝ երկխօսութեան, երկխօսութիւններու առողջ ուղի պիտի հարթէ:

175-ամեակը երեկի նուաճումներուն ծափի ծամանակը չէ: Լսենք՝ 100-ամեակի առիթով, Հայ Աւետարանական պատմութեան մեծանուն մասնագիտ Վեր. Փրոփ. Եղիա Ս. Քասունիի մտորումը.

«...անցեալով պարծենալ բաւական չէ. [...]: Ամենէն վնասակար ախտն է ինքնարկութիւնն ու ինքնահաւանութիւնը, շրենք ինքնախարէութիւնը: Ապագան ի՞նչ պիտի ըլլա: այս է որոշուելիք բուն խնդիրը մեր Եկեղեցւոյ պատմութեան սա դարադարձի կետին վրայ:

«Ապագան մեծաւ մասամբ ներկայով կ'որոշուի» (Խոսաշախ, էջ 501):

Կը հաւատանք թէ ներկայիս՝ այսօր, 175-ամեակի յորեկնական տարեկադին, մայրաքաղաք Երեւանի մէջ Հայ Աւետ. Համայիրի կառուցման ծրագրի մշակումն ու աշխատանքի սկսելու որոշումը տօնակատարութեան արժանավայել յադթանակը պիտի ըլլա: Իսկ ծրագրին իրագործումը՝ Հայ Աւետարանականութեան՝ առանձնապէս Հայաստանի մէջ, ապագայ երթը երաշխաւորող ամրապինդ ճանապարհի բացման հանդիսութիւնը:

Համայիրի կառուցումն ու անոր գործունէութեան երաշխաւորում՝ Աւետարանչական հովանաւորութեամբ, Համա-Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու քարոզչութեամբ ու հանգանակութեան կազմակերպութեամբ ստեղծուած Համայիրի Հիմնադրամի իմաստուն շահարկութեամբ ու զործածութեամբ:

Ապագան այսօրով կը սկսի: Վաղը շատ ուշ պիտի ըլլա:

Յունապար 20, 2022, Պէյրույժ

*Դոկտ. Երուանդ Քասունի - պատմաբան,
հեղինակ, եւ «Զանասեր»ի նախկին խմբագիր:





Աշակերտ թէ Առաքեալ

Տօքթ. Նազարէիթ Է. Տարագնեան*

Fոլորս գիտենք ինչ կը նշանակէ աշակերտ ըլլալ: Մեր կեանքին մէջ քասն եւ աւելի տարիներ դպրոցական աշակերտ եղած ենք: Իսկ անկէ ետք, թերեւս երբ գործի սկսանք, սկիզբը աշխատեցանք որպէս աշակերտ: Կարգ մը ասապարէզներու մէջ՝ ինչպէս բժշկութեան, աշակերտութեան տարիները աւելի երկար են: Բժիշկ ըլլայէ առաջ, ինչպէս իմ պարագայիս, ուրիշ բժիշկներու հսկողութեան տակ տարիներ աշխատեցայ մինչեւ որ բժիշկ դառնամ:

Ղուկաս 6. 12-16 համարներուն մէջ Աւետարանիչը կ'ըսէ, թէ Յիսուս լեռ ելաւ եւ ամբողջ գիշերը աղօթեց Աստուծոյ: Որոշապէս Յիսուս իր սրտին վրայ բեռ մը ունէր, որուն համար կ'աղօթէր: Բայց Աւետարանիչը անոր մասին բան մը չ'ըսէր: Սակայն, երբ առտու կ'ըլլայ, Յիսուս կը կանչէ իրեն հետեւող աշակերտները՝ որոնց թիւը չենք գիտեր, եւ անոնց մէջէն կ'ընտրէ 12 հոգի եւ զանոնք Առաքեալ կ'անուանէ:

Առաքեալ կը նշանակէ դրկուած: Այսինքն՝ մէկը որ որոշ գործի մը համար՝ որոշ առաքելութեան մը համար կը դրկուի: Ըստ Մարկոսի Աւետարանին, Յիսուս այս առաքեալներուն իշխանութիւն կու տայ քարոզելու եւ հիւանդները բուժելու: Սակայն, երբ կը կարդանք Աւետարանները, կը տեսնենք որ այս առաքեալները բաւական ելեւօներ կ'ունենային, եւ երեմն ալ սխալներ կը գործէին: Իսկութեան մէջ անոնք տակալին աշակերտ էին:

Այս աշակերտները սովորական մարդիկ էին: Անոնցմէ չորսը՝ Սիմոնը, եւ իր եղբայրը՝ Անդրէասը, ինչպէս նաեւ Յակոբոսը եւ իր եղբայրը՝ Յովհաննէսը ձկնորսներ էին: Իսկ Մատթէոս մաքսաւոր էր: Անոր գործը ժողովուրդէն տուրք գանձել էր եւ վստահաբար շատ սիրուած անձ մը չէր:

Աշակերտները՝ Յիսուսի հետ իրենց եղած ժամանակ, ընդհանրապէս իրեն կը հետեւէին՝ ուր որ Ան երթար: Անոր խօսքերը մտիկ կ'ընէին, եւ անոր հրաշքներուն ականատես կ'ըլլային: Երբեմն կը փորձէին իրենք ալ հրաշքներ ընել: Մարկոսի Աւետարանին մէջ կը տեսնենք, որ առիթով մը անոնք փորձեցին հիւանդ տղայ մը բժշկել, բայց ձախողեցան: Յիսուս պախարակեց գիրենք իրենց տկար հաւատքին համար:

Այս 12 աշակերտները կը կազմէին դասարան մը, մեր գիտցած դասարաններուն պէս, եւ ասոնց առաջնակարգերը Սիմոն Պետրոսը եւ Յովհաննէսն էին, որոնց վրայ Յիսուս մեծ յոյսեր ունէր: Մանաւադ Պետրոսին վրայ, քանի Յիսուս անոր ըսաւ, «Պետրոս... այս վեմին վրայ պիտի կ'առողջանեմ իմ եկեղեցիս» Մատթէոս 16. 18: Սակայն Պետրոս ալ, որպէս աշակերտ ունեցաւ իր ելեւէջները՝ լաւ ու գէշ օրերը:

Հետաքրքրական է սերտել Պետրոսի յառաջդիմութիւնը որպէս աշակերտ: Անգամ մը, երբ Յիսուս ջուրին վրայէն քալելով դէպի նաւակը եկաւ, Պետրոս՝ ինք ալ ուզեց նոյնը ընել, բայց վախցաւ եւ սկսաւ ընկղղմիլ ջուրին մէջ: Յիսուս ըսաւ իրեն. «Թերահաւատ, ինչը կասկածեցար» Մատթէոս 14. 31:

Ուրիշ առիթով մը, երբ Յիսուս կը բացատրէր իր աշակերտներուն թէ պէտք է որ երթար երուսաղէմ ձերբակալուելու, չարչարուելու եւ մեռնելու համար եւ երրորդ օրը յարութիւն առնելու, Պետրոս բարկացաւ Յիսուսի եւ ըսաւ, անկարելի է, այս տեսակ բան չկրնար պատահիլ: Եւ Յիսուս դառնալով ըսաւ.- «Ետիս գնա, սատանայ»: Յիսուս սատանա կոչեց զայն՝ իր առաջնակարգ աշակերտը, եւ շարունակեց ըսելով.- Դուն «ո՞չ թէ Աստուծոյ բանները կը մտածես, հապա մարդոց բանները» (Մատթէոս 16. 23):

Իսկ այս դասարանին ետեւէն առաջինը՝ ինչպէս կ'ըսենք, Յուղա Խոկարէովտացին էր, որ ոչ թէ միայն չէր հասկնար Յիսուսի ուսուցումները, այլ կը խորհիէր թէ Յիսուս բոլորովին սխալ ճամբու մէջ է: Ինք կ'ակնկալէր որ Յիսուս գիրենք պիտի մարզէր եւ պատրաստէր Հռովմայեցիներուն դէմ կորուելու: Բայց Յիսուս միայն խաղաղութիւն եւ սէր կը քարոզէր: Վերջապէս իր ատելութիւնը Յիսուսի հանդէպ այնքան սաստկացաւ, որ ան որոշեց մատնել Զայն անոնց՝ որոնք կ'ուզէին Յիսուսը մեռած տեսնել: Յուղա դրամի համար չմատցնեց Յիսուսը, հապա անոր հանդէպ իր ունեցած ատելութեան համար:

Յիսուսը ձերբակալեցին եւ տարին: Իսկ աշակերտները մէջտեղէն կորսուեցան: Նոյնիսկ Պետրոս, որ Յիսուսի ըսած էր «Տէ՛ր, որին պիտի երթանք, դուն ունիս յախտենական կեանքի խօսքերը» (Յովհաննու 6. 69), վախով ու դողով հեռուէն հեռու հետեւեցաւ Յիսուսը

տանող թափօրին: Ու երբ զինք հարցուիդեցին եւ նեղը դրին, ան երեք անգամ ուրացաւ Զանիկա:

Այլ խօսքով, երեք տարուան դասընթացքէն ետք, այդ 12 հոգինց դասարանը ամբողջութեամբ ծախողեցաւ: Եւ անշուշտ, երբ որ դասարան մը ամբողջութեամբ կը ձախողի, յանցանքը ուսուցիչին կ'ըլլայ: Ուրեմն աշակերտներուն ծախողութիւնը նոյն ժամանակ Յիսուսի ծախողութիւնը պիտի ըլլար:

Սակայն Աստուած չթողուց որ մահը իր փրկութեան ծրագրին ծախողութեան պատճառ դառնայ: Յիսուս յարութիւն առաւ եւ աշակերտներուն կեանքը այն ատեն յեղաշրջութեացաւ: Անոնք նախ չհաւատացին: Անոնք եւ զացին իրենց նախկին գործերուն՝ ձկնորսութեան կամ այն ինչ բանի որ վարժ էին ընելու: Հակառակ անոր որ Յիսուս իրենց յստակօրէն ըսած էր թէ պիտի խաչուի, մեռնի եւ երեք օր ետք յարութիւն պիտի առնէ, աշակերտներէն ուեւ մէկուն ուղեղին մէջ չէր արձանագրուած այդ խօսքերը եւ ուեւ մէկը չէր հաւատար եւ չէր ակնկալեր որ Յիսուս կրնայ յարութիւն առնել:

Միայն կիներն էին որ առոտու կանուխ դեռ չլուսցած վազեցին դէպի գերեզման եւ այն ալ ոչ թէ յարուցեալ Փրկիչը դիմաւորելու, հապա մեռեալ Յիսուսի անշուն մարմինը օծելու: Իսկ աշակերտները հոս ու հոն ցրուած՝ շուարած էին թէ ինչ պիտի ընեն հիմա որ Յիսուսը չկար այլեւ:

Յիսուս երեւցաւ եւ երկար խօսակցութիւն մը ունեցաւ դէպի Էմմառու գացող երկու աշակերտներուն հետ, բայց անոնք ալ Զինքը չճանչցան: Միայն այն ատեն անոնք Յարուցեալ Քրիստոսը տեսան եւ ճանչցան երբ իրենց ճաշասեղանին վրայ, Ան օրինեց հացը եւ բաժնեց իրենց: Միայն այն ատեն երբ Թովմաս իր մատով զգաց Յիսուսի կողին վէրքը անոնք զգացին թէ ինչ կը նշանակէ առաքեալ ըլլալ: Թէ որքան լուրջ եւ նշանակալի գործ մը եւ առաքելութիւն մը կը սպասէր իրենց: «Գացէք, աշակերտեցէք բոլոր ազգերը, մկրտեցէք զանոնք Հօր, Որդիին եւ Սուրբ Հոգիին անոնով: Սորվեցուցէք անոնց պահել ամէն ինչ որ պատուիրեցի ծեզի: Եւ ահա ամէն օր ես ծեզի հետ եմ մինչեւ աշխարհի վախճանը» (Մատթէոս 28. 19-20):

Իսկ ինչ պատահեցաւ Սիմոն Պետրոսի, որ երեք անգամ Յիսուսը ուրացաւ: Յիսուս իրեն այս հարցումը ըրաւ.- «Սիմոն, Յովիհանի որդի, կը սիրե՞ս զիս» եւ Սիմոն պատասխանեց.- «Տէ՛ր, դուն գիտես թէ քեզ կը սիրեմ» (Յովիհաննու 21. 16): Սակայն Յիսուս չգոհացաւ այս պատասխանէն եւ երկրորդ եւ երրորդ անգամ ալ հարցուց նոյն հարցումը: Սիմոն նեղացաւ որ Յիսուս նոյն հարցումը երեք անգամ կրկնեց եւ նոյն ատեն ալ զղաց որ ինք երեք անգամ ուրացաւ իր Տէրը եւ Փրկիչը: Եւ Յիսուս ըսաւ իրեն.- «Արածէ իմ ոչխարներս» (Յովիհաննու 21. 17):

Ահա այն ատեն էր որ աշակերտները դարձան առաքեալներ, եւ այս առաքեալները զացին աշխարհի բոլոր երկիրները, եւ բոլոր ազգերուն՝ մէջը ըլլարվ Հայ ազգը, սորվեցուին, մկրտեցին եւ Աւետարանին բարի Լուրջ տարածեցին: Եւ առաքեալներուն թիւը շատցաւ:

Առաքեալները պատրաստեցին ուրիշ առաքեալներ եւ անոնց թիւը բազմանալով կրցան հասնիլ մինչեւ երկրի ծայրերը:

Մենք այսօր կոչուած ենք առաքեալներ ըլլալ: Թերեւս զարմանաք կամ խնդաք այս խօսքերուն.- «Ես, առաքեալ»: Հաւանաբար խորիիք թէ առաքեալ ըլլալու համար պէտք է նախ Աստուածաբանական ճեմարան աւարտել, բարձր տիտղոսներու հասնիլ, լեզուական եւ հրետորական բացահիկ ձիոքեր ունենալ եւ հազարաւոր մարդոց առջեւ ելլելով մեծ սրահներու կամ մարզադաշտերու մէջ Յիսուսը քարոզելի: Լաւ է եթէ կրնանք, բայց պայման չէ:

Հաւանաբար խորիիք թէ առաքեալ ըլլալու համար պէտք է ճամբրորէք հեռու տեղեր, դժուար պայմաններու մէջ, քաղաքակրթութենէ հեռու մնացած եւ նախնական վիճակի մէջ ապրող մարդոց Աւետարանը քարոզելու: Լաւ է եթէ կրնաք, բայց պայման չէ:

Առաքեալ ըլլալու համար նախ պէտք է հաւատանք Յիսուս Քրիստոսի յարութեան եւ ընդունինք Սուրբ Հոգին մեր կեանքին մէջ, որպէսզի մեր կեանքը ըլլայ մաքուր, անրիծ եւ Աստուածավայել:

Մեր առաքելութիւնը կը սկսի մեր տուներուն մէջ, երբ մեր կեանքով եւ գործելակերպով կը ցոլացնենք Յիսուսի սէրը մեր զաւակներուն եւ մեր ամուսիններուն:

Մեր առաքելութիւնը կը սկսի մեր եկեղեցիներուն մէջ եւ մեր անմիջական շրջապատին մէջ: Մեր եկեղեցիներէն դուրս եթէ ելլենք, մենք պիտի հանդիպինք հազարաւոր մարդոց, որոնք ոչ զԱստուած կը ճանչնան եւ ոչ ալ Քրիստոսի Բարի Լուրջ լսած եւ ընդունած են իրենց կեանքին մէջ: Անոնք տակաւին լսած չեն թէ միայն Քրիստոսով կրնան ունենալ խաղաղութիւն, ուրախութիւն եւ յափունական կեանք: Եւ ցաւալին այն է, որ անոնց մեծամասնութիւնը մեր Հայ Քրիստոնեայ զգի զաւակները պիտի ըլլան:

Մենք առաքեալներ կ'ըլլանք երբ պատրաստ ըլլանք մեր նիւթականով սատարելու Աստուծոյ գործին: Յիսուս ըսաւ.- «Ան որ ծեզի գաւաթ մը ջուր խմցնէ իմ անունովս... Անիկա իր վարձատրութիւնը պիտի չկորսնցնէ» (Մարկոս 9. 40):

Որպէս առաքեալներ մենք պարտականութիւն ունինք օգնելու ուրիշ առաքեալներու, որոնք նեղութեան մէջ են եւ օգնութեան կարիքը ունին: Եւ դարձեալ մենք առաքեալներ կ'ըլլանք երբ մենք կը տրամադրենք մեր բոլոր կարելին մեր եկեղեցին, մեր համայնքին եւ անկէ բխած Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան: Մենք այսօր, բոլորս կանչուած ենք Քրիստոսի առաքեալները ըլլալու: Զմերժենք իր կոչը: 



* **Տօքթ. Նազարետ Ե. Տարագետան**
Նախագահն է Ամերիկայի Հայ
Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան:
Այս պատգամը տրուած է Կիրակի Մարտ
13, 2022-ին Բասատինայի (Քայլքորինա)
Հայ Կիլիկիա Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի
առաւտեան պաշտամունքին:

Joseph Zeronian, Ed.D.

Former AMAA President

August 23, 1936 - May 10, 2022



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved friend and former AMAA Board President, Joseph Zeronian, Ed.D.

Dr. Zeronian will be remembered as man of impeccable character, great integrity and strong standing. He had a profound impact on the Armenian Evangelical Church in the United States through his leadership and many years of service.

We are thankful for the years he served as an AMAA Board member beginning in 1991. A man of faith, Dr. Zeronian had a profound impact on AMAA's mission. Throughout his years as a Board member, he served as Recording Secretary, Vice President and as the President from 2012 – 2014. We can say with confidence that Joe Zeronian lived a life committed to the service.



Please join us in praying for the Zeronian family, his wife, Marilyn, his children, grandchildren and extended family. Dr. Zeronian **will be greatly missed on this side of Heaven, but we know with confidence where he stands now!**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

Editor's Note: We will reflect more on the life of Dr. Zeronian in the next issue of the AMAA News.

Richard Stephen Ajian

Richard Stephen Ajian of Antonio, TX stepped into Heaven on February 15, 2022. He was 92.

Born in Atlanta, GA to Kaloust and Siroon Ajian on November 28, 1929, Richard moved to New Orleans and eventually settled in San Antonio, TX where he lived a joy-filled life modeled after his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



True to his Armenian culture, Richard generously gave of his time and resources to local and overseas missionary work as he cared for orphans, underprivileged and anyone needing a smile or encouraging word.

Richard is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Vicki, their children, Karla and Stephen, and grandchildren, Riley and Ransom, and countless others who called him friend and brother.

A celebration of life was held on March 5 at Leon Springs Baptist Church of Antonio, TX. Donations may be made in his memory to the AMAA. [\[link\]](#)

Marie Alberian

Marie Alberian of Weehawken, NJ passed away at home January 16, 2022, living her near 99 years with a strength of conviction inherited from her ancestors who profoundly influenced the course of her life.

Her faith in God manifested as a calling to Christian endeavor in leadership positions which helped her serve as a role model to others. She found great inspiration in her maternal



grandmother, Haiganoosh Diradoor of the Karpelian/Gabriel family, who was instrumental in forming the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ in 1898.

Equally important was her father Dr. Jacob Hekimian, who made an immense contribution to the Armenian Diaspora as the first lay Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union and a two term President of the AMAA and was influential in founding Haigazian College (now University) in Beirut, Lebanon.

From a young age, Marie took responsibility in her church as a Sunday school teacher, Superintendent and Treasurer, which continued for forty years. Her participation in the choir lasted until her eighties. Marie would meet challenges faced by the Church head on as an Elder and advisor throughout her life.

Marie was a member of the Presbytery of the Palisades which consists of 57 churches and 135 ministers. She served on the Presbytery Life and Mission Cabinet and was the hunger communicator reaching out to communities. While maintaining her presidency in the Federated Women's Club of North Hudson, NJ for decades, she became President of the North Hudson Action Corp. which provides support to over 100,000 people each year.

Listing all that Marie accomplished in her long life is not possible, as she was involved in an astonishing number of projects including Chair of the regional American Heart Assoc., and Chair of the Weehawken Environmental Commission which completely revamped a 13-block stretch of the Boulevard East that faces the New York Skyline. She also spearheaded a "call to action" to rally NJ Federated Women's Clubs to prevent a 2.5 million sq. ft. mega mall from overtaking the Meadowlands of NJ. This led to a preservation of 8,400 acres of the district's wetlands and waterways.

Marie's summers were spent in Ocean Grove, NJ, which has a rich history of Christian activities that Marie also became involved in. In 1988, she received a NJ Women of Achievement Award from Rutgers University and an award from NJ State Federation of Women's Clubs.

Marie's husband, Edwin Alberian, was an Armenian American celebrity as a famous children's entertainer. After the catastrophic 1988 earthquake in Armenia, Marie and Edwin went to Armenia where Edwin performed for the children. They both were lifelong members of the AMAA, having faithfully prayed, labored and gave their time and substance for the AMAA's Mission. For many years Marie served as Chairman of the AMAA's Child Education Committee, which promotes the sponsorship of the education of orphans and poor children.

Marie is survived by her sister Gladys Keuhnelian with who she shared her entire life, and her children Warren and his wife Mary Alberian, Marilyn and her husband, Harout Aprahamian and their children, Talar, Bedros and Pateal. 

Albert Karagozian

Albert Karagozian of Los Angeles, CA went to be with his Savior on March, 25, 2022, after a long and fruitful life. Albert was born in Fresno, CA on December 28, 1922 to John Karagozian and Zevart



Hovivian Karagozian, who had immigrated to the US from Sepastia and Erzeroum, respectively, at the time of the Armenian Genocide. Albert was the second of four sons in the family, which included older brother Charles and younger brothers, Matthew and John, Jr. In 1927, the family moved to Los Angeles, which became their permanent home. Albert attended local schools, and upon graduation from high school, he entered the University of Southern California, majoring in accounting.

Shortly after the US entered World War II in 1941, as a college student, Albert volunteered for the Army Reserve. He was called to active duty in March, 1943. Albert served in the Third Army of General Patton, in the Field Artillery division, moving from England to France to Luxembourg, and then to Germany. His unit had entered the town of Eisenack when Germany surrendered in May, 1945. Upon his return home in December, 1945, Albert resumed studies at USC, where he earned the B.S. in Accounting and later became a Certified Public Accountant. Albert initially worked with the California Franchise Tax Board and with Arthur Andersen. He entered private practice in 1953 and, until his retirement in 2002, served his profession with clients well-known in the entertainment industry.

In 1955, Albert married Violet Jamgochian, and they were blessed with two daughters, Ann and Amy. The Karagozians faithfully attended Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church in Los Angeles and, later, United Armenian Congregational Church in Hollywood. Albert served with dedication in both churches as a member of the Church Council and the Board of Trustees. He was a member of the Armenian fraternal organization, the Knights of Vartan, for over 60 years, serving as local Commander and Grand Treasurer at the national level. Throughout his life, Albert was dedicated to the Lord, to his family, and to his many friends and clients, serving with the utmost integrity and humility.

Albert was predeceased by his beloved wife, Violet, and by his parents and brothers. He is survived by his daughters, Ann (Ted Sarafian) and Amy; grandchildren Joseph (Celina)

Sarafian, Abigail (Tyler) Sarafian-Hiebert and Mary Kavonian; sister-in-law, Helen Karagozian; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. Donations in Albert's memory may be made to the United Armenian Congregational Church; Knights of Vartan, Los Angeles, Charitable Fund; UCLA Geriatrics Medical Home Visit Program; Armenian Missionary Association of America; or to the American University of Armenia. 

Satenig Khounganian

Satenig Khounganian of Alexandria, Egypt joined her Lord and Savior on March 1, 2022. She was 93.



Satenig Stepanian was born in Alexandria in 1929 to Margoss and Anahid Stepanian, who were true believers and members of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Alexandria. Satenig survived her two brothers, Stepan (Australia) and Aram John (USA).

In 1948 Satenig married Vahram Khounganian, who later became the lay preacher of the Armenian Evangelical Church. They were blessed with twin daughters, Lydia and Ani, and a son, Samuel. Ani passed away at six months old. Satenig was a devoted and a praying mother, who brought up and taught her children to love the Lord and His word and encouraged them to serve the Lord using their talents.

A woman of God who loved the Lord, Satenig had her daily quiet time, reading her Bible and memorizing verses. Every year, she aimed at reading the whole Bible by following the daily allotted chapters in the "Our Daily Bread" devotional booklet. She also loved to memorize and recite her favorite hymns.

Satenig was an active member of her Church, singing in the choir and teaching Sunday School classes, caring for her students and making a huge impact on their lives. She was also a loving and devoted wife to her husband and his family and helped him to run their shop.

She was a wise, patient, forgiving and a very caring mother. She always confronted the many challenges of her life by prayer and repeating the promises of God's Word. She was also a great "encourager."

Funeral services were held on March 1 at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Alexandria and were officiated by her son Samuel Khounganian, D.D.S. She will be greatly missed by her children Lydia and Samuel (Limi), grandchildren Manuel (Marian) and their children Laura and Natalie, and Sarron (Nader), church members and friends. 

Vahe Zareh Kludjian

Vahe Zareh Kludjian of Long Beach, CA went to be with the Lord on October 17, 2020. He was 73.

Born February 27, 1947 in Tripoli, Lebanon, he was the third child of Zareh N. Kludjian and Efronia Berejiklian. His older brother was Ara Z. Kludjian, and his older sister was Arpine Kludjian. His father was an engineer and his mother was a schoolteacher. They knew how to nurture Vahe, physically, morally and culturally. In 1955, Vahe's father died from a heart attack. Vahe was only 8 and his sister Arpine was 10.



Vahe was a true believer in the Lord, Jesus Christ. He attended UACC in Studio City for decades. His patience was infinite. Vahe's kindness, not only to his family and friends, but to complete strangers was full of sincerity. When his brother Ara passed in 1989, he without hesitation was there for his nieces, great nieces and great nephews. His family will be forever grateful for his time and generosity.

Vahe completed his Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Engineering from Cal State University Long Beach in 1975 and 1981. Vahe was also holder of a Professional Engineer's License issued by the state of California. From 1978-1980, he was a Product Test Engineer for Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, MI. From 1980-2001, he was the Senior Engineer and later the Manager of Research and Development at Mazda of North America in Irvine, CA. He was a full-time Civil Engineering lecturer at CSULB since 2005.

His friends, students and colleagues were a constant part of his life. Professor Bob Alexander at CSULB became his mentor and his lifetime friend. He would call Vahe every week until his passing just to talk and share stories. His love of teaching at Cal State University Long Beach was immeasurable. He will always be the best friend of many, the best uncle, and the family gem. His gift of love, patience, wisdom, kindness and humility will always and forever live on.

Funeral services were held at Forest Lawn-Hollywood Hills in Los Angeles, CA.

Krikor (Kirk) Marounian

Krikor Artin Marounian of Los Angeles, CA, beloved husband, father, grandfather and brother, passed away on March 27, 2022. He was 88.



Kirk was born in Syria on March 25, 1934 to Artin Marounian and Marie Philliposian. He

had an older sister Anahid (deceased), and two younger sisters Berjouhie and Armine (also deceased).

His childhood changed dramatically after the unexpected passing of his father when he was 16 years old. He started working in Aleppo to support his family and then a few years later moved to Beirut, Lebanon where in 1968, he opened his first plastics manufacturing factory. He achieved professional success and then in 1970, he met and later married Silva Sarkissian and they were blessed with two children, Arthur and Carolyn.

Kirk enjoyed many happy and prosperous days in Beirut. Because of the ongoing civil war, in 1981 he moved with his family to Los Angeles. In 1987, he started his second plastics company called API Kirk Containers in the City of Commerce in LA and with much hard work and perseverance he again achieved great professional success.

Kirk had many hobbies and passions and along with his wife traveled extensively as he was determined to see every one of the 50 US states. He was very competitive and enjoyed various sports from tennis to skiing. He loved going to the opera, philharmonic and attending classical music concerts. He was also very much into health and fitness and read medical journals to enhance his knowledge.

He is survived by his wife Silva, son Arthur and his wife Lisa, daughter Carolyn and her husband Garbis Kassabian, five grandchildren Sophia, Jack, Jason, Isabella and Nicholas, and his sister Berjouhie of NJ and her husband Antranik Adamian.

A private memorial service was held on April 26. Memorial donations were designated to the AMAA.

Papken Tootikian

Papken H. Tootikian, a longtime resident of Toronto, Canada, made his transition from this world to his eternal home on May 2, 2022. His funeral services were held at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto on May 7, 2022 with his brother Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian and Rev. Yessayi Sarmazian officiating.



Papken was born in Ekiz-Olouk, Kessab, on December 25, 1947. His parents were Hagop and Keghanoush Tootikian. He received his elementary and high school education in the Armenian Evangelical schools in Kessab and Beirut. He received his undergraduate education at Haigazian University and University of Waterloo, Ontario, earning a degree of Bachelor of Science.

Following his graduation, he worked at General Motors in Detroit, MI. Later, he returned to Canada and became a partner and

General Manager of his brother Haig's newly established Imperial Rug Galleries, in Oakville, ON. Gradually, as the business grew, Papken became a connoisseur of oriental rugs.

Then, the unexpected happened—Papken had a stroke in 2017, which shook his life from its foundations. Almost totally incapacitated, Papken gradually was able to regain his mobility and daily routine through his strong faith in God and his determination. Then, came another challenge. In February 2022, he was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma to which he eventually succumbed.

In spite of all challenges, Papken was a man of faith and hope. During his illness he never gave up hope. He never demonstrated despair or self-pity. He strove to fight his disease, but alas, toward the end he lost his bout.

Papken was an outgoing and friendly individual. He was an ecumenically minded person. He had a beautiful smile, passion for service, and genuine friendliness that penetrated the hearts of those with whom he associated. He was the kind of man whose arrival was more welcomed than his departure.

Papken was a good patriot. He loved Armenia and everything that is Armenian. He was an avid reader of Armenian literature, admired Armenian writers and befriended the renowned poets Barooyr Sevag and Hovhannes Shiraz. His 2006 visit to Armenia was one of the highlights of his life.

Papken is survived by his two brothers, Rev. Vahan (Rosette) and Haig (Anahis) Tootikian; three nieces, Ann (Mark) Zartarian, Alice (Matthew) Bartlett, and Jacqueline (Michael) Voskian; three nephews, Jack (Dana), Haig Jr. (Taryn) and Armen (Elena) Tootikian; his many great nephews and nieces.

Memorial donations can be made to the AMAA's Papken Tootikian Endowment Fund.

By Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends.

Maria Agulian - Hamden, CT

* Elizabeth Ayvazian - Fresno, CA

* Yeremia Chaderjian - Torrance, CA

* Merzia Cronin - Belmont, MA

Angel Eglençeyan - Montreal, QC

* Margaret Glikas - Billerica, MA

* Andrew Gocharian - Palmetto, CA

* Knar Guekguezian - Fresno, CA

Seta Kupelian - Athens, Greece

* Andrew Gocharian - Palmetto, CA

* Sue Kilijian - Fresno, CA

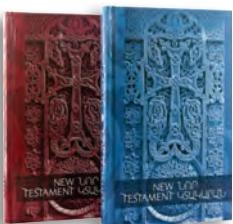
* Marcia Manoogian - N. Attleboro, MA

* Carol Rustigian - Lafayette, CA

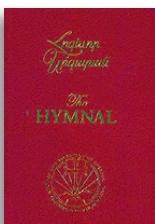
* Memorials designated for AMAA

AMAA Bookstore - Featured Books

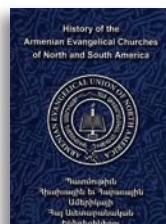
Armenian English Diglot New Testament
Western Armenian and Today's English version.
 Item # 508 - Price: \$15.00



The Hymnal (Hokeyor Yerkaran)
 Հոգեւոր Երգարան
 Bilingual Hymns
 Item # 353 - Price: \$30.00



History of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of North and South America
History of AEUNA churches, their founders, locations, pastors, leaders, and programs.
Published by AEUNA
 Item # 401CO - Price: \$10.00



A Century of Armenian Protestantism 1846-1946 (Second Printing)
The author recounts the history of the Armenian Evangelical movement from its beginning to 1946.
By Leon Arpee
 Item # 365 - Price: \$15.00

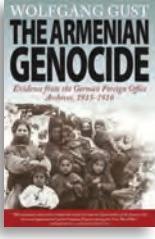


A History of Armenian Christianity (Second Printing)
A fairly objective overview of the Christian pilgrimage of the Armenian people throughout the centuries.
By Leon Arpee
 Item # 366 - Price: \$25.00

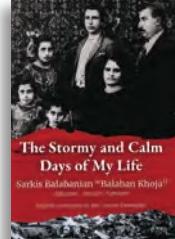
The Genesis and Early Development of the Armenian Missionary Association of America
History of the founding of the AMAA.
By Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian
 Item # 403 - Price: \$20.00



The Armenians of Musa Dagh: From Obscurity to Genocide Resistance and Fame 1840-1915
By Vahram Shemmassian, Ph.D.
 Item # 408 (paper back) - Price: \$30.00

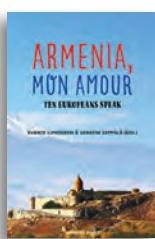


The Armenian Genocide
Evidence from the German Foreign Office Archives, 1915-1916.
Compiled and edited by Wolfgang Gust
 Item # 349 - Price: \$75.00



The Stormy and Calm Days of My Life
Educator, Rescuer, Survivor. Sarkis Balabanian (Balaban Khoja) Translated by Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian
 Item # 406 - Price: \$20.00
 All Proceeds go to AMAA Balabanian Ed. Fund

Angel of Aleppo
The story of Reverend Hovhannes Eskijian, who risked his life to save children in Aleppo, Syria during the Armenian Genocide of 1915. By M. Kay Nanian
Illustrations by Mariam Dashtoyan
 Item # 410 - Price: \$10.00



Armenia Mon Amour
Ten non-Armenian friends of Armenia describe their love for this country.
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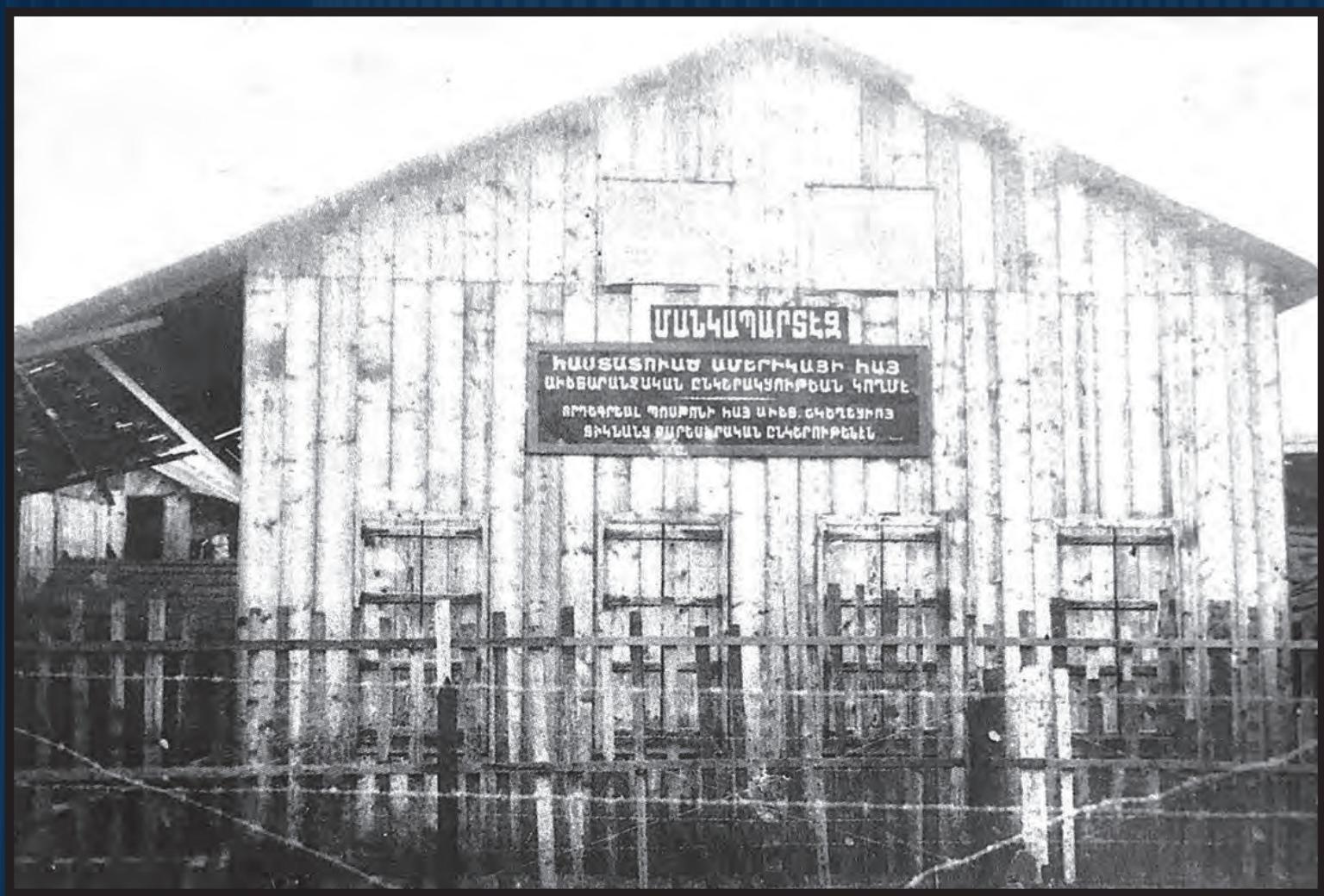
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